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1 NORTH SLOPE FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL
2 ADVISORY COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETING

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4

5 VOLUME I

6

7 February 20, 2002

8 Inupiat Heritage Center

9 Barrow, Alaska

10

11 COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

12

13 Harry Brower, Chairman

14 Paul Bodfish

15 Terry Tagarook

16

17 Regional Coordinator, Barbara Armstrong

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

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3 (Barrow, Alaska - 2/20/2002)

4

5 (On record)

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7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning everybody.

8 I'll call the meeting for the North Slope Federal

9 Regional Advisory Council to order. We have an agenda

10 before us and we'll start with roll call.

11

12 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: Harry Brower.

13

14 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Here.

15

16 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: Terry Tagarook.

17

18 MR. TAGAROOK: Here.

19

20 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: Paul Bodfish.

21

22 MR. BODFISH: Here.

23

24 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: Fenton Rexford is

25 excused. Amos Agnasagga is excused. Earl Williams --

26 Peter Williams is absent. Ray Koonuk is absent. Mike

27 Patkotak is excused. Gordon Brower is excused. Edward

28 Itta is excused. Mr. Chair, you do not have a quorum but

29 we'll have Tim Jennings give you some information.

30

31 Thank you.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Barb. Mr.

34 Jennings.

35

36 MR. JENNINGS: Yes, Mr. Chair, since we

37 don't have a quorum, Mr. Chair, we discussed that for

38 today we could cover the non-action items and save those

39 action items for tomorrow when there is a quorum. And

40 I'll go down through the agenda and indicate which items

41 on the agenda we would like a Council recommendation from

42 you.

43

44 Under Item 7, the wildlife proposal

45 review and Regional Council recommendations, those are

46 all action items that we would like a recommendation from

47 the Council. So it's our recommendation that we hold

48 those until tomorrow when we expect to have a quorum.

49

50 On the second page of the agenda, Item

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1 10, customary trade, that would be an action item so we
2 would suggest saving that for tomorrow as well.

3

4 Those are the only ones that I am aware
5 of. I'll turn to the audience to see if there are any
6 other action items that are out there. From the Park
7 Service, do we have any SRC nominations needed? Paul.

8

9 MR. HUNTER: We continue to have one
10 vacant seat. That's a decision for the Council.

11

12 MR. JENNINGS: Okay, for the record there
13 is a vacancy on the SRC and we could bring that up
14 tomorrow if the Council wants to make a recommendation.
15 I'm hearing that that would be okay from your
16 perspective, from the Park Service prospective.

17

18 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yes, we did have a
19 representative that was just appointed to -- I mean not
20 just recently, but at our last meeting just to represent
21 our council even though he was not a user from the Parks
22 area, he was going to be representing our Council at that
23 time until we have an appointment made from the Parks
24 area. And we still need to continue that, I think.

25

26 MR. HUNTER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, my name is Paul
27 Hunter with the Park Service out of the Anchorage office
28 here representing the Park. Dave Mills was unable to
29 attend, he had a conflict that prevented him from
30 attending. The previous appointment, we were unable to
31 confirm it because of the criteria established in the
32 bylaws for the Subsistence Resource Commission which
33 requires that appointees be a member of an advisory
34 group, which Mike did qualify for that but they also have
35 to be a subsistence user of the park, which means they
36 either live in one of the resident zone communities for
37 the Park, which is Nuiqsut and Anaktuvuk Pass for the
38 North Slope or they have an individual subsistence
39 permit. So Mike didn't qualify on that basis, so that's
40 why we were unable to confirm his previous appointment.

41

42 The vacancy remains and there's no
43 immediate need to fill it so at your convenience, if you
44 want to consider who is interested and willing between
45 now and perhaps the next meeting in the fall, you know,
46 we could find out who is available and you could consider
47 those individuals.

48

49 In the past it's typically been someone
50 from Anaktuvuk Pass or Nuiqsut but that doesn't

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1 necessarily have to be the case.

2

3 Again, as I said at your convenience you
4 can make the appointment over the next several meeting.
5 My understanding is that Dave Mills will be in touch with
6 you to discuss it if that's agreeable to you so you do
7 have time to make a consideration if you wish.

8

9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: My question in regards
10 to the advisory appointment, this group being a Regional
11 Advisory Council, what was wrong with that appointment
12 that we had made in terms of having Mike represent the
13 Regional Advisory Council on the Subsistence Resource
14 Commission?

15

16 MR. HUNTER: The bylaws for the
17 Subsistence Resource Commission established the criteria
18 for an actual voting participating member. And the two
19 criteria are that the members sit on a local advisory
20 committee, which could either be the Regional Advisory
21 Council or one of the local Fish and Game advisory
22 councils and also be an eligible subsistence user in the
23 Park. And the Park has a more restricted eligibility
24 criteria than the other Federal public lands. The
25 requirement is that the subsistence user be a local rural
26 resident which for Gates of the Arctic has been
27 established as a permanent resident of Anaktuvuk Pass or
28 Nuiqsut for the North Slope. For an individual outside
29 of one of those two communities who has a personal or
30 family history of hunting in the Park, and that's
31 established by applying for and receiving a subsistence
32 use permit from the Park.

33

34 Now, Mike hasn't done that. Now, that's
35 not to say he wouldn't be eligible if he did apply for an
36 individual subsistence use permit. Any one of you,
37 potentially, could be eligible based on that. But so far
38 Mike hasn't done that so that was the reason that Dave
39 Mills was not able to confirm his appointment.

40

41 He did attend the last meeting as an
42 observer and was very helpful to the Council in that
43 regard. And it's possible, perhaps with further
44 discussions with Dave Mills that if that's a pattern that
45 would be desirable for the SRC to have non-voting
46 advisory participants possibly. That hasn't been done in
47 the past but that's not to say that it couldn't be a way
48 that the Gates SRC operates. I would defer to the
49 Superintendent, Dave Mills, to really give a final answer
50 on that.

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Before we
2 go any further, I think we'll go and follow up through
3 our agenda here, Mr. Jennings, and we'll have welcome and
4 introductions. I'll start with myself. My name's Harry
5 Brower. I'm the Chairman of the Regional Advisory
6 Council. And I'll let the two Council members introduce
7 themselves.

8
9 MR. TAGAROOK: Terry Tagarook from
10 Wainwright.

11
12 MR. BODFISH: Paul Bodfish from Atqasuk.

13
14 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay, so Barb we'll
15 start with you and just keep going around the circle, I
16 guess.

17
18 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: Barbara Armstrong,
19 coordinator for North Slope.

20
21 REPORTER: My name's Tina, I'm the court
22 reporter for today.

23
24 MS. DEWHURST: Donna Dewhurst. I'm a
25 wildlife biologist on Staff with the Office of
26 Subsistence Management.

27
28 MS. HILDEBRAND: Ida Hildebrand, BIA
29 Staff Committee member to the Federal Board.

30
31 MR. CARROLL: Geoff Carroll with the
32 Barrow office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

33
34 MR. FRIED: I'm Steve Fried with the
35 Office of Subsistence Management in Anchorage.

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37 MR. YOKEL: Dave Yokel with Bureau of
38 Land Management, Fairbanks.

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40 MR. WHEELER: Gary Wheeler, Assistant
41 Refuge Manager, Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

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43 MR. UBERUAGA: Richard Uberuaga,
44 fisheries biologist, Subsistence Management in Anchorage.

45
46 MR. KNAUER: Bill Knauer, policy and
47 regulations with Subsistence Management, Anchorage.

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49 MS. H. ARMSTRONG: Helen Armstrong. I'm
50 a cultural anthropologist and I serve this Council,

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1 Subsistence Office in Anchorage.

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3 MR. BOS: Greg Bos, Staff Committee
4 member, Fish and Wildlife Service in Anchorage.

5

6 MR. BRELSFORD: Good morning. I'm Taylor
7 Brelsford and I work with the Bureau of Land Management
8 as the Staff Committee member. It's a change since the
9 last time I saw you all.

10

11 MR. HUNTER: I'm Paul Hunter with the
12 National Park Service out of the Anchorage office.

13

14 MS. MCKINLEY: Dianne McKinley, National
15 Park Service in Anchorage.

16

17 MR. JONES: I'm Rick Jones. I'm on
18 detail from Texas up here for a month and taking over for
19 Jennifer, liaison for the Anchorage office.

20

21 MR. EASTHAND: I'm Warren Easthand. I'm
22 a wildlife biologist with BIA.

23

24 MR. WISWAR: David Wiswar, fisheries
25 biologist, Fish and Wildlife, Anchorage.

26

27 MS. BROWN: Wennona Brown, subsistence
28 coordinator for the Arctic, Kanuti and Yukon Flats
29 National Wildlife Refuges.

30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And with that we'll
32 continue looking over the agenda items that we have. I
33 think I'll go back to where we left off with Mr. Jennings
34 under this review of the agenda and taking action items.
35 I think we need a quorum to adopt the agenda as is and
36 review of the minutes. I think we'll just continue with
37 the informational items.

38

39 So we'll start with the Council reports,
40 if that's okay. There's only three of us here so it
41 won't take too long, I hope -- or take all the time you
42 want, we have all morning. Terry, did you want to start
43 off giving a report from your community.

44

45 MR. TAGAROOK: Nothing that I have in
46 mind but people are doing their hunting and doing all
47 right. Everything's all right.

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Terry.
50 Paul, do you have any concerns that you'd like to bring

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1 up.

2

3 MR. BODFISH: No, I don't really have
4 anything from our town. Everybody's just getting ready
5 to go out now now that we got longer daylight time.

6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right, thank you,
8 Paul. From Barrow, I think I'll go ahead -- you know,
9 we've had quite a few hunters traveling up inland doing
10 furbearer hunting and they keep coming back and
11 complaining about all the industry activity, the seismic
12 activity that's being conducted out there and they seem
13 to have more problems with that. Not seeing any of the
14 resources out there because of all the activity. I mean,
15 probably being displaced or not being able to move -- the
16 animals not being able to move too much. That's one
17 thing I've heard over the past couple months. Well, just
18 a month, recently, the activity just started the month
19 before that. We had a lot of darkness around here and
20 people here weren't really doing any hunting. But now
21 that we have more daylight, they're starting to get out
22 and they're starting to see that industry activity just
23 within a few miles from Barrow. I don't know if you
24 consider 50 miles just a few miles, but, not too far
25 away. Anyway, that's what I keep hearing, that there's
26 quite a bit of activity out there and they're having to
27 traverse a lot further than where they're normally going
28 out. But that's one of the things -- one of the concerns
29 I've heard over the past month.

30

31 Otherwise we've had pretty good caribou
32 hunting over the fall, through the winter, early winter.
33 Good fishing. A lot of resources were available. The
34 caribou are nearby Barrow and you'll see -- if you get
35 out early enough just on the outskirts of town you'll see
36 the caribou within, you know, a couple miles off the road
37 systems.

38

39 I think those are just the basic issues
40 that I really wanted to bring out other than we need more
41 Council members here at the meetings. I think we've been
42 looking around trying to get nomination papers to send
43 into the Secretary or to Barb -- Secretary of Interior or
44 to Barb to get names submitted. And I know the
45 deadline's within the next couple of days or so. And
46 that's one of the things Terry and I and Fenton have been
47 working on, trying to get people to submit nomination
48 forms to our coordinator here.

49

50 That's all I have for Barrow. If you

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1 have any questions or any comments you folks would like
2 to make you're welcome to do so.

3

4 MS. HILDEBRAND: Mr. Chairman.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Ida.

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8 MS. HILDEBRAND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 Ida Hildebrand, BIA Staff Committee member. In regards

10 to your questions regarding your resources, I know the

11 NPR-A had their own council organized. Do you know if

12 they've received any complaints or any concerns?

13

14 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I have not heard

15 anything through the BLM office or anything like that.

16 But just hunters that are traveling and coming back and

17 saying that they see all this activity in the hunting

18 areas, you know, that's what I keep hearing. I know it's

19 been expected and coming for a long time, I guess, but

20 now we're starting to see it and realizing it, you know.

21

22 MS. HILDEBRAND: Thank you.

23

24 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Ida. Any

25 other comments or questions.

26

27 MR. BRELSFORD: Thank you. Just a quick

28 second on the point of the NPR-A leasing program, Bob

29 Schneider, the northern field office manager is scheduled

30 to join us this morning to provide a presentation on the

31 leasing program. And I think some of these questions

32 about this new subsistence advisory council addressing

33 leasing concerns, concerns of the local communities about

34 leasing activity would be -- this will be a great time to

35 talk to about those when Bob is here.

36

37 Thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Taylor.

40 Continuing on with our informational items, maybe, Tim

41 you could help me out in identifying those again, which

42 ones we can proceed with.

43

44 MR. JENNINGS: Well, Mr. Chair, I think

45 you could proceed with the summary under the Chair's

46 report of the fisheries -- Regional Council Chairs

47 meeting in December, and, then Item 2, the Chair and the

48 Board meeting in December followed by any summary that

49 you might want to have for the Board meeting itself, and

50 then annual report issues. I'll defer to Barb on that

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1 one to lead the discussion.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Tim. In
4 regards to the fisheries, we didn't have too much in the
5 fisheries proposals. There was that one we did for the
6 Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. That's continuing.
7 Although we didn't hear too much as to their findings on
8 the research, they're still doing the work on that.

9

10 I talked with Fenton a couple of days ago
11 and he said that they're going to be writing up the
12 report, I think, and reviewing the documents for the work
13 that they did last summer.

14

15 We have our minutes from our Regional
16 Council Chair meeting under Tab C in the booklet. This
17 meeting took place in Anchorage on December 9, 2001 and
18 there's the 10 Regional Council Chairs that met before
19 the -- the day of the Federal Subsistence Board meeting,
20 anyway. We discussed the issues that were brought out
21 during the Regional Council meetings. There was a couple
22 of issues under that meeting that we had brought forth
23 during our Regional Council, one was the compensation
24 request and the other one was under that customary trade,
25 that task force, the recommendations that were being made
26 as to what approach to take. Those were the two issues
27 that I could think of right off the bat that we had
28 concerns on in our fall meeting.

29

30 Anyway, I forwarded a letter that I
31 received from Barb to each of the Council members
32 regarding the compensation request being denied by the
33 Secretary of Interior. I think we'll have to probably
34 sometime address that as a Council, whether we want to
35 request to continue to see what kind of changes that we
36 could make or recommend in regards to the compensation
37 request. I don't think it's going to be a dead issue. I
38 think just from receiving the letter from the Secretary
39 of Interior, I think there's different approaches that we
40 could probably take to see where we can get further along
41 in this issue. Because I know there's concerns from our
42 other Council members that are not here in regards to
43 this compensation for the meetings that they attend.

44

45 Do any of you have any questions, Terry
46 or Paul, in regards to the compensation update?

47

48 MR. TAGAROOK: We should continue these
49 discussions when we have a quorum.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: To continue on with the
2 customary trade, there is comments that we discussed, the
3 recommendations by the Customary Trade Task Force during
4 the meeting. This is located on Page 3 of the minutes.
5 There is some recommendations for language changes in
6 regards to what's already in existence under the
7 customary trade regulations. I'm just bringing them out
8 for discussion. We talked about them during the meeting
9 with the 10 Regional Councils. We did bring up some
10 concerns and submitted and our comments from Gordon and
11 myself to Barb and then to the Chairman of the 10
12 Regional Council Chairs. And the issue is now before us
13 and we will probably be discussing this with our quorum,
14 if and when we get a quorum as to what approach we are
15 taking now in regards to the Federal Register and seeking
16 comments and identifying which alternative we would like
17 to see of if there's another way of defining which action
18 item we would like to discuss or support.

19
20 But we'll discuss that at a later time
21 with our Regional Advisory Council when we have a quorum.
22 Any comments or questions. Terry.

23
24 MR. TAGAROOK: I think we could discuss
25 this when we have a quorum.

26
27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yes. Any comments Tim
28 or Barb in regards to these issues? Do you want to go
29 into further detail?

30
31 MR. JENNINGS: Well, Mr. Chair, I would
32 only indicate that customary trade is on the agenda for
33 the meeting and I'll provide some additional information
34 and background that will bring you up to date in terms of
35 Board action and then options and recommendations that
36 you can evaluate as a Council and hopefully we'll have a
37 quorum tomorrow to do that.

38
39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yes. I think that
40 would be the appropriate time to discuss and get into
41 further detail in the discussions of the customary trade
42 issue. We do have these minutes just to comment on,
43 Terry or Paul, do you have any questions in regard to
44 this meeting that happened on December 9. There was a
45 variety of other issues that were presented by other
46 Council members pertaining to their region. Most of them
47 were in regards to fisheries that were being done in the
48 specific regions, especially on salmon. And then there's
49 the delegation of authority for the Federal Subsistence
50 Board to make appointments to the RACs. Those are just

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1 some of the issues that were discussed. There's another
2 one in regards to the North Pacific Fisheries Management
3 Council and the Federal Subsistence Program dealing with
4 Yukon-Kuskokwim salmon. That's another entity that deals
5 with fish out in the open seas, I believe.

6
7 If there's no other comments in regards
8 to this agenda item, maybe we'll continue on with the
9 December 10, Federal Subsistence Board Council Chairs and
10 the Federal Subsistence Board meeting on December 10.
11 There was a variety of issues discussed at that meeting.
12 Again, we didn't have the proposals in regards to
13 fisheries that was to be discussed from our part,
14 although there was other Council members or Councils that
15 had concerns in regards to the fisheries management. The
16 only comment I made in regards to that was we were
17 requesting to remain status quo in regards to our
18 fisheries management on the North Slope. We haven't
19 submitted any proposals in regards to fisheries
20 regulation changes and we continue voicing that concern.
21 I don't think we've heard any comments or requests for
22 proposals to be submitted in regards to regulation
23 changes.

24
25 We don't have so much of a problem with
26 our fisheries here on the North Slope and it's basically
27 subsistence fishing although we do have one area near
28 Nuiqsut that deals with commercial fisheries, but we have
29 not heard any requests for regulation changes in regards
30 to that fisheries that occurs there in Nuiqsut. So I'm
31 trying to think of what other issue was brought out.

32
33 It was basically talking about the
34 Federal Subsistence Board review and fisheries proposals
35 for regulation changes and a lot of them were focused on
36 salmon, the different species of salmon in the different
37 regions. And that's basically what occurred during that
38 December 10 meeting with the 10 Regional Council Chairs
39 and the Federal Subsistence Board.

40
41 Any comments or questions. Tim, did you
42 want to add anything or make comments? Barb. I want to
43 get back to our agenda then and conclude that part of the
44 discussion.

45
46 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: More on the annual
47 report issues.

48
49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Excuse me.

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1 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: The annual report.

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3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: 2001 annual report
4 issues. Okay, go ahead Barbara.

5

6 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: Okay. For your 2001
7 annual report, I'll need some issues and one that I've
8 heard already so far is compensation. So if there are
9 any issues that are in the North Slope area that you guys
10 would like to put in your annual report the first draft
11 usually comes out like in April and I'll be writing to
12 you again, individually, and asking you for issues on
13 your annual report.

14

15 Thank you

16

17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Is there any other
18 informational items that we need to review or should we
19 wait until we get a quorum to discuss this issue on Item
20 7?

21

22 MR. JENNINGS: Yes, Mr. Chair, those are
23 action items, the wildlife proposals so we would
24 recommend that you wait until you have a quorum tomorrow
25 and we'll take up those wildlife proposals that are
26 listed there at the bottom of the first page of the
27 agenda.

28

29 MS. DEWHURST: Tim, 46 isn't. That's one
30 that Helen could just discuss.

31

32 MR. JENNINGS: 46, Helen, do you want to
33 deal with that now? That's an informational item. We
34 may want to also, though, give a brief update tomorrow
35 for those Council members who aren't present today.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yes, I agree on that.
38 It's always good to pass on that information when Council
39 members are present.

40

41 MS. H. ARMSTRONG: Do you want me to do
42 just do it tomorrow when they're here?

43

44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What's the Council's
45 wish?

46

47 MR. TAGAROOK: Do you guys want to hear
48 her again tomorrow? We'll wait for a quorum.

49

50 MS. H. ARMSTRONG: Wait for a quorum,

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1 okay, thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yes, it will keep us
4 from repeating what we've discussed already. Thank you,
5 Helen. Okay, we're pretty much done with this first
6 page. Turning on over to the next page of our agenda is
7 Item 8, do we have any informational items that we'd like
8 to discuss under Item 8? From the public? From the
9 agencies? From the Regional Council? I guess we'll deal
10 with that when we have a full quorum again. I'm kind of
11 lost for words here. Discuss proposals for changes in
12 fisheries Federal regulations without a quorum is
13 somewhat redundant if we do discuss this issue and have a
14 quorum tomorrow and then having to hear the same issues
15 again is somewhat redundant.

16

17 Go ahead, Tim.

18

19 MR. JENNINGS: Yes, Mr. Chair, on this
20 item, No. 8, the open floor to change fishing
21 regulations, for the Yukon Northern area, the North Slope
22 area, you may recall -- I believe it's a couple of
23 meetings ago, about a year ago or so, we looked
24 specifically at the regulation booklet and in your area
25 there is a C&T finding for all fish for residents of the
26 northern area in fresh water other than rainbow or
27 steelhead trout and I'm not aware that you have any
28 rainbow or steelhead trout up here. And then the actual
29 take of fish is unlimited for subsistence purposes
30 there's no permit required. You can fish at any time in
31 this area. So as we reviewed this a year ago it was
32 basically very broad in terms of subsistence harvests and
33 species for fish and there wasn't any identified need to
34 change regulations unless there's a conservation concern
35 that might arise with some of your fish stocks.

36

37 So I would just bring that to your
38 attention. And so we had, at that time, a year ago or
39 so, the Council had indicated that things were going
40 pretty well with all the fish stocks and there was broad
41 regulations in place to allow the subsistence harvest and
42 take of these fish and so there weren't any identified
43 needs for changing the regulations. So I just wanted to
44 bring that back in front of you for just a consideration
45 as you think about changing regulation. It doesn't
46 appear that there's any need unless there's a
47 conservation concern.

48

49 Mr. Chair.

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Tim. Yeah,
2 I don't think we've really had any concerns voiced in
3 regards to getting any regulation changes in regards to
4 our subsistence fisheries here. I think they still
5 continue to voice the status quo. So we'll just -- it's
6 good to hear that -- you know, we've not made any
7 recommendations, I think a lot of the community members
8 from Barrow here are still voicing that concern, not to
9 make any changes to the way we do our fishing here on the
10 North Slope, especially within the Barrow area and we do
11 cover a lot of area out in the country side and have
12 different fishing opportunities at different times of the
13 year for the different species, including some of these
14 -- I'm not sure if they're rainbow trout but there are
15 trout out there in them lakes, some Arctic Char. So I
16 don't think there's been any recommendations for changes
17 to the current fisheries. I'll just share this with you.
18 You know, I haven't heard anything unless any of you
19 folks, Terry or Paul, have you heard any recommendations
20 for changes?

21
22 MR. TAGAROOK: (Shakes head negatively)

23
24 MR. BODFISH: (Shakes head negatively)

25
26 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

27
28 MR. TAGAROOK: Why don't we take a break.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We'll call for a 10
31 minute break, if that's all right. Okay, thank you.

32
33 (Off record)

34
35 (On record)

36
37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good morning everybody.
38 I think we'll call the meeting back to order this
39 morning.

40
41 Apparently we didn't get the rest of our
42 members in this morning but we'll continue with our
43 informational items which is No. 9, I think. We'll start
44 with the Fisheries Resource Monitoring, don't we have
45 some informational items that we're going to share on
46 that issue. Steve Fried, go ahead.

47
48 MR. FRIED: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
49 Council members. My name is Steve Fried. I'm with the
50 Office of Subsistence Management in the Fisheries

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1 Information Services Division. And this is informational
2 on several topics this morning and it has to do with the
3 Fisheries Resource Monitoring program, the program that
4 funds studies that provide information to assist the
5 management of the Federal subsistence fisheries. Some of
6 the information is under Tab F and then there's two
7 handouts that are at the table there, one is on long-term
8 planning and the other one is a status report on the
9 ongoing studies that were funded in 2000 and 20001.

10

11 I guess what I'd like to start off with
12 are the regional information issues and needs and kind of
13 review and update. There is something under Tab F which
14 is the existing listing of the issues and information
15 needs for this area and this document is provided to
16 people that are interested in submitting study proposals
17 because it focuses their effort on the things that are of
18 most importance to this area and every area in the state
19 has a listing. And these have been developed by the
20 Councils with input from local residents and world
21 organizations.

22

23 The list is extremely important for the
24 program because it does focus, you know, the studies and
25 when the reviewers take a look at the studies, I mean,
26 the first thing they look at is whether or not the issue
27 is for a subsistence fishery that the Federal government
28 does have jurisdiction over and the next important thing
29 they look at is, is it an important issue that's been
30 recognized by the Council for this for this region. And
31 for that reason, it's very important to revisit these
32 issues and information needs every year, at least.

33

34 One of the handouts I provided is a long-
35 term planning document that isn't in the book but it's on
36 the table in front of you. And what we're trying to do
37 is to take a look at the programs in every region to make
38 sure that when we get five, 10 years down the road that
39 we really have addressed the important needs and that the
40 studies that are being done really are providing some
41 information that is really of use to the management
42 program. And there is a little background and then
43 there's a graph, Figure 1, that basically shows the
44 expenditures for each of the years. The program started
45 in the year 2000. Right now we're writing agreements and
46 contracts to provide money to investigators for 2002
47 studies and we had a call for 2003 studies and the
48 proposals have just come in on February 15th. So we're
49 basically into the fourth year of this program and what
50 we're going to try to do is look ahead to 2004 to make

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1 sure that the program is on track and it is looking and
2 addressing all the important needs.

3

4 And, I guess, the key thing to take a
5 look at on this figure is the fact that at this point the
6 Federal Subsistence Board when they set the program up
7 has put a three year limit on funding for a program or a
8 study, so that when somebody proposes a study it can be a
9 max -- they'll get funding for a maximum of three years.
10 In 2000 the money was called all year money and that
11 money was used to fund all three years of the study. For
12 the other years, though, we don't necessarily have enough
13 money to fund, you know, two or three years of a study if
14 it's more than one year. An so what happens is that
15 every year we have to take money out of the budget for
16 that year to fund studies that are still ongoing. And
17 what's happened in 2003 is that there's very little money
18 available for new studies. Most of the money is being
19 used to continue studies that had begun in 2001 and 2002
20 and also money that's being devoted to the Partners in
21 Fisheries Monitoring Program, that's a new program that's
22 begun this year that I'll talk about later. In 2004,
23 there's actually a fairly large amount of money that
24 would be available for new studies and this is why we
25 thought it would be a good time to start a planning
26 process to decide how that money would best be used.

27

28 Some of the things to think about is that
29 some studies really need to go on for more than three
30 years because three years of information for some things
31 isn't enough. These are studies such as counting or
32 assessing fish populations. Three years of information
33 is nice but really if you really want to get an idea
34 about what the trends are and the status of the stocks
35 are, you really need long-term studies, more than three
36 years. The same thing in a lot of cases for getting
37 information on estimating the harvest for subsistence
38 fisheries. I mean this is a long-term -- it should be a
39 long-term effort and it shouldn't just end after a year
40 or two.

41

42 So some of this money needs to be
43 dedicated or, at least, a thought needs to be given to
44 dedicating this money for more than three years. And
45 there's some decisions about, well, how much of the
46 program should go to studies that need to continue on?
47 How much money should be reserved for new studies for
48 different information needs that might come up over time?

49

50

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1 So if you look at Page 3 of this handout,
2 what we're doing is trying to address what we thought
3 were probably five important questions, you know. One,
4 is how well have the funded studies addressed the
5 Council's information needs and issues. Two, is have the
6 most important issues and information needs been
7 identified already? In other words, does the list that's
8 in this book cover everything that really is of
9 importance? Three is what I just spoke about is which
10 issues and information needs require continued collection
11 of long-term data sets? The fourth question is are there
12 any matching or alternative funding sources to consider
13 when selecting studies? In other words, maybe there's
14 some other sources through the Federal government, State
15 government, other funding initiatives that might be used
16 to continue long-term studies or at least supplement it
17 so that we don't need to fund an entire study, we can
18 share the funding with some other source to cut down the
19 money we're spending and make our money go a little bit
20 further. And the fifth question is, what results have
21 been attained from the funded studies and how are they
22 being used, you know, because it's nice to collect
23 information but you don't just want to collect
24 information to collect information. It should be useful
25 for something.

26
27 And if we can answer these questions, we
28 can get an idea of whether or not we're addressing the
29 issues, what information gaps and holes still need to be
30 filled. We could build, you know, a framework so that we
31 can balance these long-term commitments with the new
32 studies that we need to do and we can also take a harder
33 look at how we can, you know, match or leverage funds
34 from other programs to help us make our money go farther.

35
36 So basically what this document does is
37 try to answer a few of these questions, basically the
38 first four and as far as the results and how they've been
39 used, I think, right now we're going to sit down and
40 we'll probably have a more detailed report on that come
41 the September meetings.

42
43 In general, I don't want to -- I'll just
44 kind of go through this very quickly, but, you know, have
45 the studies that we funded addressed the issues and
46 information needs that the Council has identified and
47 basically what I did was list the information needs
48 starting on Page 4 and just general topics and the
49 studies that we've actually funded to take a look at how
50 we're doing and what issues they've been focused on. And

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1 for this area, basically the studies that have been
2 funded have focused on char and whitefish assessment and
3 harvest monitoring. And also there's been quite a bit of
4 effort placed on evaluating and improving the methods we
5 use to assess harvest and also making sure that the
6 information is stored and is useable by people.

7

8 There's some issues that haven't really
9 been addressed. Some of the Councils have been
10 interested in things like the effects of sportfishing on
11 subsistence harvest and the resources and coastal ecology
12 and water quality and contaminants and some of these
13 issues really aren't -- can't be addressed by this
14 program, they should be addressed by other programs. So
15 I guess the bottom line in this is that we've basically
16 been able to direct the funding towards issues and
17 information needs that have been addressed by the -- that
18 have been identified by the Councils for their regions.
19 But I think we still need to look at the list and take a
20 look and revise it and get rid of some of the issues we
21 can address, like water quality contaminants and some
22 marine studies that really are outside this program. And
23 then also take the list and prioritize it because there
24 is limited money, we need to make sure that we're hitting
25 the most important issues so we need to figure out which
26 ones are more important than other issues.

27

28 The next question, really, are all the
29 important issues, have they been identified already?
30 There's a list of what I came up with, what seems to be
31 important and some of the things that have been
32 addressed. And I think the Councils have generally been
33 successful in identifying the important issues and needs
34 for the regions. There's a few additions that might be
35 needed that aren't on the list. These have to do mostly
36 with things that are outside this particular geographic
37 area. But also there seems to be some interest in
38 funding studies on Arctic grayling around Point Hope and
39 some other things that haven't been addressed and I think
40 it's just important to figure out, you know, are these as
41 important as some of the other studies, you know, how do
42 they stack up. And so I would hope the Council would
43 take a look at the list here and decide, you know, are
44 these the issues that are really important, is there
45 anything missing? And, you know, I said before, we need
46 to prioritize these things.

47

48 The next thing on Page 8 sort of tries to
49 answer this question about which issues and information
50 needs require long-term data sets. And you really want a

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1 long-term data set for fish stocks that are not only
2 important but that are heavily used so that, you know, if
3 the fisheries could impact the actual abundance of the
4 stock then you really need to have a lot of information.
5 If the harvests are pretty small in relation to the stock
6 then it's not that critical. So in those cases you might
7 just need to have some baseline and periodic checks every
8 once in awhile instead of collecting information year
9 after year after year. And the same thing goes for the
10 harvest and for any traditional ecological studies, you
11 know. A lot of times you collect baseline information
12 over a few years and then you just need to go back, maybe
13 every three years, every five years to take a check to
14 make sure that things aren't changing.

15

16 And for this particular area, on the
17 North Slope, it's kind of hard to decide, you know,
18 whether or not we need to have long-term continuing
19 studies. There's maybe some possibilities on maybe
20 starting some studies on whitefish and the char. But
21 it's not real clear. I think we need some further
22 thought on whether we really need to do annual studies on
23 a lot of the things, you know, up on the North Slope.

24

25 As far as matching or other sources of
26 funding go, there's really not a lot we've been able to
27 turn up with at this point. There's three fairly new
28 programs that are going on. Most of these have to do
29 with salmon in the marine environment. So you know,
30 might have some use for this area. I've listed those.
31 There's a Norton Sound salmon research and restoration
32 fund. There is what's called the North Pacific Research
33 Board, which is a board that will administer a program
34 for studies on, not only salmon but other fisheries and
35 fish in a marine environment and ecosystems. It was
36 taken in the North Pacific, the Bering Sea and the Arctic
37 Ocean so this one might be of interest to monitor. It's
38 new, they haven't funded any studies yet. The money is
39 there. There's been a block of money that's been
40 dedicated to it. The program is going to work just on
41 the interest off of this money so it's basically a
42 continuing long-term program, they don't need to go to
43 Congress every year to ask for more money. It's nice
44 that way, you can make some long-term planning efforts.
45 And right now they are putting together a board to decide
46 how the money will be used. The third one is being done
47 by the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission, it's an
48 international organization. It's geared at salmon in the
49 high seas. And they're starting a new program that
50 they've called the Bering Aleutian Salmon International

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1 Survey and this is going to look at high sea salmon
2 issues. So those three programs, but really for this
3 area, we're either going to look at more -- trying to get
4 more money dedicated to the Fisheries Research Monitoring
5 Program or somehow matching other State funding sources
6 to continue these studies in this area.

7
8 So, that, basically summarizes, you know,
9 the issues and information needs. And I think we're
10 doing fairly well, as I said, meeting -- you know, having
11 funding studies that are meeting the issues that have
12 been identified. I think we need to take a look and the
13 Council needs to take a look at the list to make sure
14 that all the things that are contained, they're all
15 important, let's get rid of some of the issues that can't
16 be addressed by this program and make sure that they're
17 in some priority listing so that we make sure that we're
18 looking at all the important needs first. And I guess
19 we'll just have to take a look and keep our eyes open for
20 any kind of ways to match and extend the funding because
21 there's just not much funding to go around statewide in
22 the program. Even though there is several million
23 dollars, it does not go very far.

24
25 I don't know if anybody has anymore
26 questions about that but this is kind of a long-term
27 effort and it is important for the Fisheries Resource
28 Monitoring Program.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Terry or
31 Paul, any questions for Mr. Fried.

32
33 MR. BODFISH: (Shakes head negatively)

34
35 MR. TAGAROOK: (Shakes head negatively)

36
37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Mr. Yokel, Dr. Yokel,
38 come on up. Or I should say, come on down; The Price Is
39 Right.

40
41 MR. YOKEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I
42 hope I'm not out of place here but I wanted to mention a
43 couple of things that you might think about in line with
44 this subject. As you know, the BLM has its own advisory
45 council now for research and monitoring in the NPR-A, we
46 also have an advisory council for subsistence issues in
47 the NPR-A. And we are looking at studies of all kinds
48 that will help us manage the NPR-A's resources in a way
49 that will reduce conflict with subsistence uses.

50

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1 And I have before me a letter from Craig
2 George discussing what he and a panel that, a committee
3 that he chair'd thinks are important fisheries studies
4 that need to be addressed. I'm sure Steve here has more
5 than enough competing requests for this money but one of
6 the top things on this list here is they suggest that we
7 conduct a detailed traditional knowledge survey with
8 elders in Nuiqsut and Barrow of fish in fishbearing lakes
9 and streams in the exploration area. By exploration area
10 he's referring to that area of the coastal plain west of
11 Nuiqsut and basically stretching up to Barrow now. He
12 says this should be a high priority since many of the
13 people with intimate knowledge of this area are quite
14 elderly.

15
16 And then another topic that they mention
17 here is fisheries harvest studies, again, especially in
18 the area, the triangle between Nuiqsut, Barrow and
19 Atkasuk where exploration is either ongoing or likely to
20 occur in the next few years. So these are some things
21 that are certainly important to the subsistence users in
22 this area and your Council may consider this and any
23 recommendations that you make to the Fish and Wildlife
24 Service because we have not made any proposals to them as
25 yet for funding. I'm just beginning to catch up with the
26 fisheries issue. It's a little bit foreign to me.

27
28 Thank you.

29
30 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Dr. Yokel.
31 Any questions, Terry, Paul.

32
33 MR. TAGAROOK: I have one. Are there any
34 studies being done on the Colville, like in the Umiat
35 area?

36
37 MR. YOKEL: Well, in the Umiat area, in
38 particular -- just a little bit off the subject, but in
39 the Umiat area, the only study that I know of was
40 contracted out by the Corps of Engineers related to the
41 contaminants in the Umiat area. I think the North Slope
42 Borough, through Dr. Todd O'Hara has taken a second look
43 at the analysis of that but I'm not sure if the Borough
44 has done any data collection of their own on that issue.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Are you questioning me
47 about the Borough collecting data?

48
49 MR. YOKEL: Well, Terry's question has to
50 do with the contaminants around the Umiat area, I think,

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1 and I'm not sure if the Borough has actually collected
2 any data about that. I know the BLM has not, the Corps
3 of Engineers has. And I'm not sure where it's gone since
4 then.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Just a comment on that
7 issue, I think we've -- the North Slope Borough Fish and
8 Game Management Committee, we've discussed issues in
9 regards to where the contaminants are coming out of and
10 what fish are being affected. And there's some fish that
11 Dr. O'Hara and Craig collected from the Nuiqsut area to
12 get analyzed for contaminants and I think they did
13 receive some information and the Corps of Engineers did
14 do some type of research as to what all was involved in
15 the contaminants, research on the fish, and the outcome
16 from that is they did have a community meeting in Nuiqsut
17 and they did make the statement regarding the fish were
18 edible, you know. After the first finding was that the
19 fish were highly contaminated and then the outcome of
20 that was that they had the community meeting and they
21 reexamined the outcome of that from the research that
22 they conducted and said that they were able to eat
23 burbot, I think it was the biggest concern, but now
24 they're getting more -- the scope, the project is getting
25 a little bit bigger in terms of continuing the
26 contaminants research.

27

28 MR. YOKEL: I know that's continuing and
29 BLM is moving in that direction a little bit, too, but
30 that's really not the subject that Mr. Fried was
31 addressing. But I just wanted to bring up a couple of
32 things that I hope maybe are relevant to this Fisheries
33 Resource Monitoring program.

34

35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Dr. Yokel.

36

37 MR. YOKEL: Thank you.

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Mr. Fried, I have a
40 couple of questions. Paul and Terry, do you?

41

42 MR. TAGAROOK: Go ahead.

43

44 MR. BODFISH: Not now.

45

46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: In terms of this long-
47 term -- we did have a proposal through the North Slope
48 Borough, Department of Wildlife Management, submitted a
49 proposal and it was listed in here under that grayling
50 research. It was Craig George who had filled out the

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1 proposal and submitted it to the Fisheries Monitoring
2 Program and he was not able to answer the questions,
3 principle investigator at the time, but I had mentioned
4 to him that it was still an option for him to submit the
5 proposal again to see where it would go this year and he
6 was hoping to be here during the discussions but I think
7 we're a little bit ahead of the schedule in talking about
8 the proposal now. But I was wondering if that would be
9 something that the Council would need to consider to
10 voice a concern to continue with that proposal?

11
12 MR. FRIED: Yes, Mr. chairman I remember
13 that proposal. And if I recall, when it was reviewed by
14 the Technical Review Committee that they did want to see
15 an investigation plan which is the next step, which would
16 provide more detail. And the original proposal spoke to
17 collecting information on harvest and also collecting
18 some biological information. I think it was going to be
19 done in conjunction with a consultant. And there was a
20 question about whether or not the fisheries of concern
21 were actually associated with Federal lands. And so the
22 suggestion was, and instead of going out and doing the
23 biological sampling that first year, would be to collect
24 information on harvest and including traditional,
25 ecological knowledge, to interview people and find out
26 where the harvest has been historically to get some more
27 information on that. And an investigation plan was never
28 received. The person that was in the OSM office that was
29 overseeing that tried to contact the investigator several
30 times and they were not in the community and never got
31 back to them so without an investigation plan it just
32 couldn't go any further.

33
34 But as you said, they're perfectly, you
35 know, they're invited to resubmit if they would like to.
36 I don't know if they have or not. All the proposals for
37 2003 came in on February 15th. They're going through
38 them now to -- I haven't even looked at them yet because
39 they're still being given a number and being filed and
40 put on the computer so I'm not sure if they're
41 resubmitted or not but it's certainly a valid topic to
42 take a look at it again.

43
44 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I work with Craig in
45 the same office, in the same department and so I did try
46 to bring it up to him to resubmit but with the amount of
47 work that he's involved with in trying to keep up with
48 all the other work that he's continuing, he was having
49 some time problem trying to get these things arranged but
50 he did say he was going to review the proposal and

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1 resubmit.

2

3 The other issue was in regards to this --
4 just a clarifying question as to why it was -- let me see
5 I need to find out where I was looking at that. Issues
6 and information needs identified by the Councils have not
7 been addressed and these can be grouped into four issues
8 and one of them was in the water quality and contaminant
9 affects on subsistence fisheries resources. Why was that
10 chosen to be identified as not to be addressed?

11

12 MR. FRIED: I think it was last -- a year
13 ago December, a Board meeting, the 2001 Board meeting, we
14 specifically asked the Board to take a look at some
15 issues and give us an answer as to whether or not they
16 were appropriate for the program to address and one of
17 these was the water quality contaminant issues and the
18 Federal Subsistence Board said that that was not an
19 appropriate issue for this program, that there are other
20 programs such as programs run by the Fish and Wildlife
21 Service, Ecological Service Division, Environmental
22 Protection Agency, the State's Department of
23 Environmental Conservation that would be more appropriate
24 to look at this. They have the experts and they've got,
25 actually some money to do this and they really -- the
26 Board didn't want to see money from the Fisheries
27 Monitoring Program being used to do that, not that it's
28 not a very important issue but they're just trying to
29 direct things that are more appropriate to the fisheries
30 management side of things.

31

32 There's also a couple other areas, too,
33 that they said weren't appropriate. One was anything to
34 do with fisheries enhancement or propagation or
35 hatcheries. So this was basically a Board decision. It
36 wasn't something that, you know, wasn't -- the reviewers
37 decided. So this is just guidance from the Board. Now,
38 I suppose the Board could change their mind in the
39 future. But at this point that's what -- those are the
40 rules and guidelines they've given us to work under for
41 the program.

42

43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. I have
44 another question here. To further along the discussions
45 here, in regards to the stock, status and trends, I know
46 they just started the research work on that last summer
47 and there was concerns from our representatives from
48 Anaktuvuk and Kaktovik in regards to the fish. And the
49 concerns were that the fish were having -- the texture of
50 the fish were not the same as what they used to harvest.

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1 There was something like they were affected by something.
2 And I was wanting to know if there is any kind of notice
3 from the research that was conducted, that was something
4 of an issue that would be identified during these stock
5 trend assessments? You know, that probably under the
6 harvest monitoring that would probably be discussed or
7 brought out to see if the past fisheries that they'd done
8 -- I mean catching the fish before and eating that fish
9 for a long time and they noticed in just recent times
10 that the fish texture's starting to change and it seemed
11 like they're not eating the fish or not harvesting the
12 fish as much as they used to because of the texture and
13 the fish changing over time, I suppose. I'm not really
14 sure as to what caused that problem. I was wondering if
15 there was any kind of indication from this research,
16 maybe a preliminary report on that, if there's been any
17 indication of a change?

18

19 MR. FRIED: Personally, I haven't heard
20 about that one. But I would hope that that might be
21 captured in one of these two harvest monitoring studies
22 that are being funded. If you look on Page 4 under
23 harvest monitoring, there's a study on Eastern North
24 Slope, Kaktovik subsistence harvest assessment, there's
25 another one on the North Slope, Anaktuvuk Pass. And
26 maybe they're collecting some information on that one,
27 they're doing the interviews.

28

29 There aren't any traditional ecological
30 knowledge studies being done in North Slope, both of
31 those are being done in Northwest Arctic. So as I said,
32 I didn't see anything on that topic in the status reports
33 that were sent in but I guess we could -- supposedly, I
34 guess they were concerned about it could be the same
35 disease organism that they were having problem with on
36 the Yukon, ichthyophonous, so it could be a disease or it
37 could be temperature related, but I don't know,
38 personally.

39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Just something that was
41 voiced from our Council members and them not being here
42 to comment on these issues, I thought I'd bring them up
43 just for discussion purposes to see if there's been like
44 a preliminary report or discussion brought out in regards
45 to the research that's being conducted.

46

47 You had your hand up, yes, please.

48

49 MR. WISWAR: Mr. Chair, Council members.
50 My name is David Wiswar. I'm with the Fairbanks Fishery

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1 Resource office. I understand in the September meeting
2 there was some questions about ichthyophonus, which is
3 one of the parasite diseases that is found in chinook
4 salmon in the harvest in the Yukon River. I have some
5 information to present on that. I can either do it now
6 or later on in the program here. It's at your
7 discretion.

8

9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: You said you're in a
10 later discussion?

11

12 MR. WISWAR: Yes, I'm in a couple of
13 items down on the program and I could present that
14 information on that time if you wish or now, it's up to
15 you.

16

17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Probably at that time
18 would be appropriate.

19

20 MR. WISWAR: Okay.

21

22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you very much.

23

24 MR. WISWAR: I just wanted you to be
25 aware that we do have some information.

26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. That's all
28 the questions I have. Thank you very much, Mr. Fried,
29 unless there's any other comments or questions from the
30 public, Staff. Okay, thank you very much.

31

32 MR. FRIED: Okay, thank you. I've got a
33 couple more topics under the Fisheries Resource
34 Monitoring Program that will be a little bit quicker than
35 this one.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

38

39 MR. FRIED: And one is just, you know,
40 briefly the 2003 call for proposals which I've already
41 mentioned before. The call is in the book under that
42 same tab, Tab F, and as I mentioned before, the call went
43 out, all the proposals were supposed to be submitted on
44 February 15th and at this point I really couldn't tell
45 you how many proposals there are for this particular
46 geographic area. I've seen at least three or four. Some
47 of which do speak to some of the issues that haven't been
48 addressed before. I think there is at least one proposal
49 that looks at Arctic cisco. And I haven't looked at all
50 of them so I don't know if there's a grayling proposal in

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1 there. there's a whitefish proposal. How many proposals
2 we'll -- new studies we'll be able to fund this year, I'm
3 not sure, because there's only about \$300,000 statewide
4 available for new studies. So it will be interesting to
5 see, you know, what we're going to be able to do. That's
6 where we are on the call, we're on schedule for that.

7

8 I don't know if there's any more
9 questions on that. I can go to the next two topics if
10 there aren't.

11

12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And this is only on the
13 fisheries -- I mean white fish in the Colville, in
14 regards to this proposal?

15

16 MR. FRIED: I don't recall. I just
17 remember that there were two -- the two proposals that
18 came in that I passed along to the person that's taking
19 care of that to document and file them, one had to do
20 with whitefish.

21

22 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Uh-huh.

23

24 MR. FRIED: And it might have even been
25 the Northwest Arctic, I'm not even sure it was North
26 Slope. But there was one on Arctic cisco that was for
27 the North Slope.

28

29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you.

30

31 MR. FRIED: The next thing I'd just like
32 to bring to your attention is not in the book, it's
33 another handout and it basically summarizes the progress
34 made on the studies that were already funded. And it
35 lists the studies, which ones have already been finished,
36 which ones are still ongoing and then it also gives just
37 a little short paragraph on what the status is to-date.
38 And basically most of the studies have been going along
39 fairly well, have made good progress.

40

41 You know, there's been a few problems but
42 most of these have been due to staffing changes, either
43 within agencies or problems in finding local residents
44 that wanted to take some of the seasonal positions.
45 There have been problems that really are not under our
46 control, basically with weather, with high water, which
47 makes it difficult to do, either an aerial survey or try
48 to keep a weir in the water. There's also been a little
49 problem with sometimes designing some of the surveys at
50 first. And the first year is -- sometimes you do find

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1 things you'd like to fix. So none of these are real
2 serious problems, they're all being addressed. The
3 studies are all going, you know, basically on schedule so
4 things are going pretty well. And like I say, if you're
5 interested, there's on these, you know, there's like
6 three pages, two pages have a little summary as to
7 exactly what's being done in each of the specific
8 studies.

9

10 Then the last thing would be the Partners
11 for Fisheries Monitoring. And again, I can't tell you
12 very much about that. We look at it as an extremely
13 important part of the Fisheries Resource Monitoring
14 Program. This is the program that would fund positions
15 that would be hired by a local organization to work in
16 the region. The positions would be either a fisheries
17 biologist or social scientist. And we're hoping to get
18 these positions filled prior to this summer's field
19 season. Some of the things you've discussed, like this
20 grayling study, where people don't have time to put
21 together a proposal, I mean if we had a position like
22 this within the region that would really be a big help
23 because they could help people do things like that.

24

25 The proposals are in, there was an
26 evaluation panel that's working on selecting which ones
27 to fund. I think they're having another meeting this
28 Friday. So I'm not exactly sure how many positions are
29 going to be funded this summer. I think there was money
30 to fund somewhere between seven and 10 positions.

31

32 Like I say, we're just in the process now
33 of trying to draft cooperative agreements so that when
34 the panel does select the different positions to fund
35 that we can go ahead and get those through the system
36 pretty quickly and get the funding out the door. There's
37 been over a million dollars dedicated to this in 2002 and
38 on down the line. They're looking at five years of
39 funding for these positions at first, with reviewing
40 annually, whether or not these positions are doing what
41 they're supposed to do and things are going along. And
42 most of the positions also have funding for what they're
43 calling a summer student intern to work with these people
44 to get some of the younger people that are going to
45 school in the region involved directly with the program
46 and give them some training and mentoring. So we look at
47 this as an important program. It's been in the works for
48 a few years and it looks like we're finally going to be
49 able to fund some of these positions starting this
50 summer.

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1 And that's all I have on these topics
2 unless there's some more questions from, either the
3 Council or anybody in the audience.

4
5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I have a question, Mr.
6 Fried, in regards to this Partners for Fisheries
7 Monitoring will be a primary way to ensure local
8 involvement, is there a way or place to submit like an
9 application if a person's interested to work in this
10 fisheries monitoring program? Do you have like an
11 address or place where you go to to apply or show that
12 you're interested in doing some of the work in this or is
13 just basically for students that they make a request to
14 be part of this research?

15
16 MR. FRIED: That's a good question. Like
17 I said, they really haven't -- I don't think the
18 evaluation panel has actually given approval to any of
19 the organizations that put proposals in to actually say
20 that you were successful, we're going to fund this. I
21 think they're real close. Once they do that, then these
22 positions are going to be hired through a local
23 organization. And so they're going to be the ones that
24 will advertise and try to find somebody and I'm assuming
25 we can help out if they need some help, but basically the
26 people that are hired will be an employee of the
27 successful applicant, so they won't be a Federal employee
28 or State employee, they'll be employed by whoever gets
29 the agreement funded. The only stipulation is that it's
30 supposed to be a professional position, it's going to be
31 dedicated full-time year-round. So if it's a fisheries
32 biologist, they'll be looking for somebody with a college
33 degree in fisheries biology or science or something
34 related. Hopefully they can find somebody with a little
35 bit work experience on top of that. And as far as a
36 student intern goes, I would think that would happen once
37 they get these full-time permanent positions in place
38 because the fisheries biologist or scientist would then
39 kind of mentor and help supervise that student intern.
40 And I know the Office of Subsistence Management will take
41 a roll in that two in working very closely with both of
42 these positions to help them do their job and make sure
43 that we're all working, you know, to basically help each
44 other out to make sure that it's helping the Fisheries
45 Monitoring Program and the region and the Council.

46
47 So right now, just the short answer is
48 there's no place to submit an application because we
49 really haven't gotten an agreement signed off yet but
50 hopefully it will happen in the next month or so.

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right, thank you
2 very much. Do you have any other issues that you need to
3 cover?

4
5 MR. FRIED: No, that's about all I have.
6 Thank you.

7
8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. The next
9 issue we have on our agenda is agency reports. I guess
10 we'll just follow the agenda as to who is listed there.
11 We have U.S. Fish Wildlife Service, Subsistence
12 Management, OSM Organizational Chart. Barb.

13
14 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: We've had so many
15 turnovers in the OSM Department that I requested that we
16 present or have a handout for an informational item for
17 the Office of Subsistence Management current positions
18 filled and who are in these positions in case anyone
19 needs to get a hold of anyone in particular for certain
20 issues. So there is one handout here for you and then I
21 think there's one up here on the desk.

22
23 Thank you.

24
25 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Barb. Then
26 No. 2, 2002 nomination process.

27
28 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: Our 2002 nomination
29 process began on January 2 and it closes on February 22.
30 For the North Slope region currently we have five
31 applicants and it closes on the 22nd. So we have a few
32 more days to get more applications in if there is anyone
33 that has any interest to sit on the North Slope Advisory
34 Council.

35
36 Thank you.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Barb. No.
39 3, we have State Rural Determination Methodology.

40
41 MR. KNAUER: Good morning, Mr. Chairman.
42 My name is Bill Knauer. Before we go into that, I've got
43 one item that I think we need to go back to and that's
44 related to Council membership balance, and this is just
45 an information item.

46
47 As you know the Office of Subsistence
48 Management and the Board recently received a letter from
49 the Deputy Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Steven Griles,
50 and it concerned the membership balance on Regional

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1 Advisory Councils. In his letter, Mr. Griles requested
2 that we review procedures for recommending Council
3 members to ensure that we are complying with the Federal
4 Advisory Committee Act regarding the membership balance
5 and representation of all affected user groups, that is,
6 subsistence, sport, commercial, urban, rural, Native and
7 non-Native. There's also a review of FACA committees
8 going on nationwide. A copy of this letter with a
9 transmittal from the Chair of the Board was sent to all
10 Council members and Mr. Jennings has extra copies for you
11 if you want to look at it. He also has copies that are
12 available for members of the audience.

13

14 We realize that the letter from Mr.
15 Griles may raise some concerns, however, we want to
16 reassure you that we welcome this opportunity to review
17 the administrative procedures and processes for Council
18 member appointments. As the Chair indicated in his
19 letter, we believe that we have a solid record and we are
20 complying with the spirit and intent of both, ANILCA and
21 FACA. However, Mr. Demientieff has established a
22 committee of Board members or their designees to
23 undertake a review of our nominations process, including
24 the selection process.

25

26 The guiding principles that have been set
27 for this membership balance committee include, number 1,
28 keeping subsistence management and the goals of ANILCA,
29 Title VIII as the primary focus in our procedures to
30 ensure membership balance on the Councils is in
31 accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Two,
32 to promote selection of Council members who will work
33 constructively to uphold the Title VIII mandate. And
34 three, to recognize that there are several interests that
35 are directly affected by the Federal Subsistence Program,
36 and that those interests should be provided an
37 opportunity to be directly involved in the subsistence
38 management process. This committee will provide
39 recommendations back to the full Board and, after review
40 by the Board recommendations will be forwarded to Deputy
41 Secretary Griles. We will keep the Regional Councils
42 informed as this review process proceeds.

43

44 That concludes my briefing on this issue,
45 Mr. Chairman.

46

47 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Mr. Knauer.
48 Any questions for Bill from the Council, Harry or Paul.

49

50 Bill, I have a question on this process

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1 and recommending membership. Is this to enlarge the
2 membership within each of the 10 Regional Councils or is
3 this specific to an area where the problem is occurring
4 in regards to maybe fishing management or something like
5 that?

6
7 MR. KNAUER: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure
8 of the actual intent of Mr. Griles letter, however, he's
9 asking the Board examine the membership balance because
10 one of the things that the Federal Advisory Committee Act
11 does require is that there be a balanced membership on
12 the Councils. And they just want to make sure that our
13 process, our recommendation process and recruitment
14 process is a very wide open process that provides
15 opportunities for all those that are interested and
16 knowledgeable about the subsistence program have an
17 opportunity to apply and the chance to sit on Councils.

18
19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Bill. Any
20 other comments or questions? So we'll be discussing this
21 at another time to make this into an action item? Will
22 we need to take any formal action from our Council in
23 regards to this issue?

24
25 MR. KNAUER: No, Mr. Chairman, this is
26 just an informational briefing for you. The letter from
27 Mr. Griles asked that the Board review its procedures and
28 make sure we are in complete compliance with the Federal
29 Advisory Committee Act and the group that Mr. Demientieff
30 has put together is chaired by Mr. Keith Goltz from the
31 Solicitor's office. They are reviewing our procedures
32 and if there are modifications necessary they'll be
33 recommended to the Board who will indicate to Mr. Griles
34 what processes or steps we may wish to change to be sure
35 that we remain in compliance. And each of the Councils
36 would be informed of any procedures that are modified.

37
38 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Bill. Any
39 other comments or questions? Again, thank you very much
40 Bill.

41
42 MR. KNAUER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
43 The other item relates to the statewide rural
44 determination methodology contract. And again, this is
45 an informational briefing only, there is no action that
46 is necessary. The information I'll be presenting is in
47 Tab H of your Council book.

48
49 But just an update, as you're aware the
50 current rural determinations was developed with public

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1 input back in 1991 by the Federal Subsistence Board. The
2 initial rural and non-rural determinations were based on
3 the methodology that was developed at that time.
4 However, since then there have been some concerns
5 regarding this methodology, particularly focused in the
6 Kenai Peninsula and there was an out-of-cycle
7 determination that the Board made in 2000 and then
8 reconsidered and reversed in 2001. The process that we
9 currently have does include a review of all rural and
10 non-rural determinations following every 10 year census
11 which was completed in 2000 and we'll be receiving the
12 data on that in the next year or so. In anticipation of
13 that 10-year statewide review and to further evaluate the
14 concerns that were raised regarding the methodology, the
15 Office of Subsistence Management has awarded a contract
16 to an independent third party that does have familiarity
17 with Title VIII and the rural and socio-economic issues
18 here in Alaska. In September, this contract, following a
19 competitively bid process was awarded to the University
20 of Alaska-Anchorage, Institute of Social and Economic
21 Research. The contract is proceeding according to
22 schedule and we expect completion in June of this year.

23

24 Their first report was a report was a
25 review of existing literature relative to rural and non-
26 rural definitions and processes. They've recently, also
27 conducted eight, what they call focus group meetings to
28 solicit and record perception of local residents
29 regarding what distinguishes rural from non-rural
30 communities as related to the subsistence priority. They
31 held these in Deering, Kotzebue, Copper Center, Kenai,
32 Soldotna, Ketchikan, Saxman and Fairbanks. And the idea
33 was to examine individual perceptions in a number of
34 different types of areas. Urban areas, road-connected
35 villages, regional hubs, non-road-connected areas with
36 tribal groups and so on. On each of these focus groups
37 there were Regional Advisory Council members that
38 participated. In addition to the Council members, other
39 participants of those focus groups included long-term
40 residents, local business people, tribal officials,
41 recreational users, ADF&G local advisory committee
42 members, and essentially many people with just a lot of
43 experience with the Alaska subsistence and rural issues.

44

45 The Regional Councils will have an
46 opportunity to review the methodologies at the fall
47 meeting that's coming up and you'll be able to provide
48 comments to the Board at that time. The Board will
49 consider the methodologies that this contract produces.
50 And they, along with representatives of the entire

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1 Council system who happen to be Gerald Nicholia and Dan
2 O'Hara will be deliberating the appropriateness for Board
3 use.

4

5 Following the adoption of the new
6 methodology, which could actually entail the use of the
7 current one or a totally new one or one that's somewhere
8 in between, the Board will use the 2000 data and then
9 other criteria to examine the communities across Alaska.
10 And with Regional Council recommendation will be looking
11 at the rural and non-rural determinations probably in the
12 year 2003. By that time we'll have both the methodology
13 and the 2000 census data on hand so the Board will be
14 able to utilize that material altogether.

15

16 And that concludes my briefing, Mr.
17 Chairman.

18

19 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Bill.
20 Questions or comments.

21

22 Bill, I think I heard you say that they
23 were going to be bringing out their preliminary findings
24 but I didn't catch when that was going to be?

25

26 MR. KNAUER: We expect the contract with
27 the methodologies to be completed in June of this year.
28 And that will be provided to the Board and we will bring
29 it to the Councils for your comments at your fall meeting
30 this year.

31

32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right, thank you.
33 So this basically is based on a 10-year review as to
34 whether there's a rural or non-rural determination, that
35 it still coincides with the current determination that's
36 made on these communities?

37

38 MR. KNAUER: That's correct. We know
39 that there are some areas that there have changed. For
40 example -- one good example is currently, Adak, is
41 identified as a non-rural community and that original
42 determination was based on a very, very large military
43 presence on Adak. Well, as you know, the U.S. Navy
44 withdrew from that area and there has been a significant
45 change in the demographics out there. So all of the
46 determinations may not be accurate. But this process
47 will allow us to determine that on a very realistic level
48 as to what the Board determines that they should be.

49

50 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other comments or

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1 questions. Thank you, Bill.

2

3 MR. KNAUER: Thank you very much.

4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We have under agency

6 reports, No. 4, Federal and State coordination. Tim.

7

8 MR. JENNINGS: Yes, Mr. Chair, I'll

9 handle the next briefing on Federal/State coordination.

10 For the record my name is Tim Jennings. I'm with the

11 Office of Subsistence Management. In your Council

12 meeting books under Tab H, Page 3 there is a briefing on

13 Federal/State coordination.

14

15 This briefing is intended to bring you up

16 to date in terms of the working relations between the

17 Federal agencies and the State agencies relative to the

18 Federal Subsistence Management Program. This briefing is

19 for information purposes and there is no action required

20 by the Council at this time.

21

22 I want to go back in time a couple years

23 to the beginning of the more active Federal involvement

24 fisheries and there was an interim Federal/State

25 Memorandum of Agreement, an MOA that was developed and

26 agreed to in April of 2000. And this was agreed to by

27 the State Commissioner of Fish and Game, the Chair of the

28 Alaska Board of Fisheries, the Chair of the Alaska Board

29 of Game and then the Federal agency heads in Alaska, Fish

30 and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Park Service,

31 Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and

32 then also the Chairman of the Federal Subsistence Board.

33 And these individuals are referred to as the signatories

34 of the MOA. And this MOA between the Federal and the

35 State programs was a broad -- it's been termed as an

36 umbrella document which set out the goals of coordination

37 between the Federal agencies and the State agencies. And

38 the purpose was to establish guidelines for coordination

39 between the Federal and the State agencies, particularly

40 Fish and Game in managing subsistence use of fish and

41 wildlife resources on Federal public lands in Alaska.

42

43 For the MOA, this was a large umbrella

44 document, broadly stated, and there was a recognized need

45 to develop more specific documents or protocols to put

46 the details behind the larger umbrella document. And to

47 do this there was an MOA working group that was

48 established consisting of representative of the Federal

49 agencies and from the State Fish and Game. Here today on

50 the MOA working group from the Federal agencies we have

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1 Ida Hildebrand and Taylor Brelsford, who are on the MOA
2 working group.

3
4 The specific agreements that come off of
5 the MOA are termed protocols, there are six of them and I
6 want to just briefly mention the status of each of those.

7
8
9 There is a subsistence management
10 information sharing protocol. This basically outlines
11 out information and data, data basis, et cetera will be
12 shared between State and Federal agencies. This is in
13 the final stages of being completed and it is ready for
14 the signatories on the Federal and State side to review
15 and to initial or sign this protocol.

16
17 The second protocol is a Yukon River
18 Drainage Subsistence Fisheries Management protocol and it
19 is nearing completion. It lays out the framework for how
20 subsistence fisheries on the Yukon and the Kuskokwim
21 Rivers will be managed, in particular with the in-season
22 management decisions that need to be made on those two
23 rivers. And I know that you're aware that in recent
24 years this has been a very high priority issue for the
25 State and Federal agencies because of the low salmon
26 returns to the Yukon River, in particular.

27
28 The third protocol is a regulatory
29 coordination protocol. There's been committees and
30 subcommittees that have been established. There is a
31 second briefing in your book under Tab H on Pages 4
32 through 6. Basically this protocol looks at the
33 different regulatory processes on the Federal side versus
34 the State side. Looks at the Council process leading to
35 the Federal Board process. On the State side there are
36 the local advisory committees and then either the State
37 Board of Fisheries or the State Board of Game. And these
38 committees will look towards trying to streamline or to
39 coordinate effectively between the State processes and
40 the Federal process through information sharing, through
41 the possibility of joint meetings. And there's a benefit
42 in trying to align the processes. Right now, as you're
43 aware, the Federal side is on an annual cycle for both
44 wildlife and fisheries. Each year we take up wildlife
45 proposals. Each year we take up fisheries proposals.
46 The State Board of Game and Board of Fisheries don't
47 operate on an annual cycle within a specific region. For
48 some regions, for instance, on either the Board of
49 Fisheries or the Board of Game on the State side, issues
50 will only come up in a region every two or three years

00037

1 for review. So we'll take a look at that and see if
2 there's a way we can better coordinate the annual cycles.

3
4 Another protocol is fisheries regulatory
5 management planning. The MOA working group is in the
6 process of developing a draft charge for this protocol.
7 And the charge is basically a one-page summary of the
8 goals and objectives and how the details will be
9 developed for the protocol. So that one is in the
10 initial stages.

11
12 The fifth one is a statewide in-season
13 subsistence fisheries management protocol. This is
14 similar to the Yukon and the Kuskokwim document where it
15 looks at in-season management, pre-season planning, post-
16 season evaluation but it looks at it on a statewide
17 basis. This one, again, is in the initial stages of
18 being developed. It will probably be one of the last
19 ones to be done.

20
21 And then the sixth and final one is a
22 protocol called the subsistence use amounts protocol, and
23 I have a separate handout here, if I could get some help
24 distributing this. There was a first meeting held on
25 February 7th, just a few days ago in Anchorage and this
26 one page summary gives the highlights of that meeting and
27 there will be another meeting coming up, a second
28 meeting in mid-March in Nenana as part of the YRDFA,
29 Yukon River Drainage Association meeting in Nenana.
30 Representing Council members on this subsistence use
31 protocol is your Chairman, Harry Brower, and also Gerald
32 Nicholia or Craig Fleener from Eastern Interior Councils,
33 either one of those gentlemen will also represent
34 Councils on the subsistence use amounts protocol.

35
36 So, Mr. Chair, in summary, one other item
37 in terms of Federal/State coordination is annually our
38 office provides some funding to the State for a liaison
39 and coordination purposes and Staff support and we're in
40 the final stages of finalizing those funding agreements
41 with the State. And that concludes my briefing, Mr.
42 Chair, and if there's any questions I'd be happy to
43 address those.

44
45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions or
46 comments to Tim, Paul or Terry. Thank you, Tim. There's
47 no questions or comments so thank you again.

48
49 Next on our agenda is National Park
50 Service. Paul.

00038

1 MR. HUNTER: Mr. Chairman, members of the
2 Council my name is Paul Hunter representing the National
3 Park Service. I'm here representing Gates of the Arctic
4 National Park today for Dave Mills, the superintendent
5 who had a schedule conflict so he sends his regrets that
6 he wasn't able to attend the meeting today.

7
8 We've already covered most of what we had
9 to bring to your attention today and that was the vacancy
10 on the Gates of Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission.
11 And I have a handout for you which is the charter for the
12 Subsistence Resource Commission which might be important
13 as you consider the appointment. It includes the
14 eligibility criteria for membership on the Council. This
15 is a charter that's approved by the Secretary of the
16 Interior, regular Federal Advisory Committee Act Council
17 and so we have to follow those guidelines in making
18 appointments.

19
20 Just one comment regarding Deputy
21 Secretary Griles memo to the Federal Subsistence Board
22 regarding appointments to the Regional Advisory Councils,
23 we've considered that with regard to the Subsistence
24 Resource Commissions just for purposes of considering
25 whether or not the same principles might be of concern by
26 the apartment for the Subsistence Resource Commissions,
27 and we've concluded that because of the specific
28 appointment criteria for the Subsistence Resource
29 Commissions and the more restrictive hunting that's
30 allowed in the Parks that are covered by the Subsistence
31 Resource Commissions that generally the considerations
32 are not applicable to the Subsistence Resource
33 Commissions but notwithstanding that, we're committed to,
34 you know, the broadest membership that we can from the
35 local areas that do engage in subsistence uses in the
36 Parks. So we would definitely encourage, you know, the
37 broadest consideration of candidates for appointment to
38 the SRC for Gates of the Arctic National Park.

39
40 Since your remarks earlier this morning,
41 at the break, I talked with Council member Paul Bodfish
42 about his interest and he indicated that he might be
43 willing to serve so there's an additional volunteer,
44 perhaps. And while he does not live in Anaktuvuk Pass or
45 Nuiqsut, just from my preliminary discussions with him
46 indicates that his family and himself have hunted in the
47 Park, so I don't believe there would be a problem with
48 receiving a subsistence permit for the Park. If you do
49 decide to make a recommendation at your meeting tomorrow
50 when you have a quorum, if you made that contingent on

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1 receiving the permit we could facilitate getting that
2 processed. So I'd just throw that out for your
3 consideration since we talked earlier this morning.

4
5 Well, let me just repeat the criteria
6 that caused the confusion when Council member Patkotak
7 was recommended for appointment a couple of meetings ago.
8 And that was the issue of eligibility to hunt in the
9 Park. And at present he did not meet that eligibility
10 criteria. So on the assumption that he will not be
11 applying for a subsistence permit to hunt in the Park he
12 would not be eligible because he does not live in
13 Anaktuvuk Pass or Nuiqsut which provides automatic
14 eligibility for subsistence in the Park. And that's on
15 the back side of that sheet, it's under Item No. 9(c)
16 where the criteria are listed. Now, what it says is that
17 they be a member of either a Federal Regional Advisory
18 Council or a local advisory committee and also lawfully
19 engaged in subsistence uses within the Park. That phrase
20 is where the -- is what you need to be lawfully engaged
21 is either resident of one of those two communities or
22 have a permit so that's where that requirement comes
23 from.

24
25 Beyond that I have just one other item.
26 We've recently had a change in the phone system in the
27 Park headquarters so I have a handout for you of the
28 telephone list for the Park. If you've been having any
29 difficulty getting through to the Park, anyone here, that
30 may be the reason so we pass that along to facilitate
31 communication with the Park. It also includes Yukon-
32 Charley. The Gates of the Arctic National Park also --
33 the Staff there also manages the Yukon-Charley National
34 Preserve so that's why that is included on there.

35
36 And with that, that concludes my briefing
37 for the Gates of the Arctic National Park. I'd be glad
38 to take any questions if you have any.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Mr. Hunter.
41 Any questions to Paul, Paul or Terry. I'd just like to
42 make a comment in regards to the criteria, you know,
43 that's used to identify the user -- or the appointee from
44 our Regional Advisory Council. Just reading that first
45 sentence there, that's what we are basing our information
46 on to get Mike onto the Subsistence Resource Commission,
47 I think it was based -- part of our misunderstanding,
48 that that's what it would take, just being on the Council
49 from the North Slope Regional Advisory Council, and just
50 based on that Mike volunteered and nobody else who really

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1 wanted to -- or the representative not being at the
2 meeting for two times and the member from Anaktuvuk not
3 being present at the meetings for a couple times and Mike
4 volunteered and said, I'll be the representative to the
5 Subsistence Resource Commission so we just voted him in
6 that way not knowing that we'd done something wrong.

7

8 Anyway, I just wanted to make that
9 comment and make it be known.

10

11 MR. HUNTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
12 And we apologize for that confusion because we caused it
13 by not clarifying sooner the full criteria that we're
14 required and as mentioned this morning, Mike did attend
15 as a courtesy, the last meeting of the SRC, and was very
16 helpful, and we appreciated his willingness to
17 participate. And as I mentioned earlier, if he does have
18 a personal or family history of hunting up in the Park,
19 he certainly would be eligible for a permit so if he
20 wanted to follow through and pursue that we'd certainly
21 welcome that.

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Well, we'll probably
24 forward that question to him tomorrow if he's here during
25 the meeting. He's quite vocal, you know, in terms of
26 representing the North Slope. He's got a lot of
27 knowledge about traveling and hunting on the coast line
28 east and west so he's quite vocal as to representing
29 people or the community. Thank you.

30

31 MR. HUNTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

32

33 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We're down to 11C, U.S.
34 Fish and Wildlife Service, Arctic Refuge. Gary.

35

36 MR. WHEELER: Mr. Chairman, Council
37 members, I'm Gary Wheeler, Assistant Refuge Manager for
38 the Arctic Refuge here representing Richard Voss and the
39 Arctic Refuge.

40

41 I'd just like to brief you on the field
42 activities that have been conducted by the Arctic Refuge
43 during last year and also mention some of the activities
44 that we have planned this year for monitoring
45 populations.

46

47 In the summer of 2001 we conducted -- and
48 this information, in terms of our activities last year is
49 contained in Tab H of your booklet. On June 14th
50 through the 16th of 2001 we conducted our annual ground

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1 base survey of dall sheep in the Atigun Pass area. This
2 survey has been conducted annually since 1987 and the
3 purpose is to monitor the age and sex composition of the
4 sheep population in this area. The total of 208 sheep
5 were observed, including 46 lambs per 100 ewes last year.
6 And this represented an average year in terms of the
7 number of sheep and also the production of lambs.

8

9 Regarding moose, in April of last year we
10 flew our annual moose survey in wintering habitat along
11 the stream courses between Galbraith Lake and the Canning
12 River. This was the 12th survey conducted in this area
13 since 1986 so it's been done almost every year. Weather
14 conditions were good and we covered about 90 percent of
15 their wintering range. A total of 146 moose were
16 observed and this was similar to the number of moose
17 observed from about 1995 through 2000 but only about half
18 as many were seen during 1986 through '94. So it appears
19 the population is considerably reduced than in earlier
20 years.

21

22 Regarding caribou, the Arctic Refuge
23 Staff assisted the Department of Fish and Game in
24 conducting a photographic census of the Porcupine Caribou
25 Herd and the results of this census indicates the herd
26 currently numbers approximately 123,000 animals. This
27 estimate was derived by counting the caribou on 414
28 aerial photographs that were taken on July 3rd of last
29 year while the herd was congregated along the eastern
30 border of the 1002 area within the Arctic Refuge. The
31 current population estimate indicates a decline of about
32 4.7 percent from the last census in 1998. And the herd
33 has declined about 31 percent since its peak population
34 number of 178,000 in 1989 but it is still larger today
35 than it was during the 1970s when it was estimated at 100
36 to 110,000 animals. The current decline appears to have
37 begun during a series of hard winters from 1990 through
38 1993, which reduced calf production and survival. And
39 the herd continued to decline during the mid- and late-
40 1990s when late winter weather was less severe and calf
41 production survival were greater. But more recently, in
42 the last couple of years, persistent snow cover during
43 May and June delayed the herd in reaching its preferred
44 calving grounds on the costal plain of the Arctic Refuge.
45 This reduced the survival of calves so that only 44 to
46 51 percent of cows were accompanied by calves at the end
47 of June when photographed on the coastal plain. These
48 were the lowest rate of calves recorded during the more
49 than 20 years of research on the herd. So it was
50 expected that the herd would continue to decline, however

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1 the 1.5 percent annual rate of decline since 1998 is less
2 than the 3 percent decline between 1989 and 1998, which
3 suggests the survival of adults may have been greater in
4 recent years. The next photo census is scheduled for the
5 summer of 2003. In addition to the photo survey, Arctic
6 Refuge assisted in placing about 43 radio collars on
7 Porcupine Herd cows in March while on their wintering
8 range. This maintained the number of working collars at
9 about 85, which assists in tracking the herd's movements
10 and in determining calving areas and the initial
11 productivity and early calf survival.

12
13 In September we flew our annual fall
14 staging snow goose survey on the coastal plain and this
15 survey tallied about 103,000 snow geese which is an
16 average year. Our yearly average is 104,000 birds.

17
18 Regarding muskox, a precalving census in
19 April of 2001 documented 168 muskoxen on the Refuge.
20 This is lower than the 250 muskox that were counted in
21 the same area in '99/2000. The number of muskox on the
22 Refuge were relatively stable between '87 and '98
23 averaging about 324 animals, but have declined in the
24 past three years. This decline is likely due to low calf
25 production and some muskoxen moving off of the Refuge.
26 Calf production was low in '99 and even lower in 2000 and
27 2001. In addition, we've documented that grizzly bears
28 have killed several adult and subadult muskox in the past
29 few years. In the last two years we've documented the
30 deaths of eight adult muskoxen and one calf by bears on
31 the Refuge. And so that's a mortality factor. Severe
32 winter weather also hindered calf production in the past
33 few years. In years of heavy snow or a late snow season,
34 fewer calves are born or survive until late June.
35 Groups of muskoxen also left the Arctic Refuge in the
36 last year. In 2001 Canadian biologists counted almost
37 200 muskoxen east of the US/Canadian border and located
38 four radio-collared female muskoxen that came from the
39 Arctic Refuge. And it appears like the gain in numbers
40 in Canada correspond to the fewer numbers on the Refuge.

41
42 Arctic Refuge personnel also provided
43 logistic support for a census of grizzly bears conducted
44 by the Department of Fish and Game in Game Management
45 Unit 26(B) and parts of 26(C). That was conducted in
46 June 2001. The preliminary results from that survey
47 indicate a density of about 17 bears per thousand
48 kilometers within this area, 26(B) as composed to -- as
49 opposed to about 29 bears per thousand kilometers in the
50 Western Brooks Range so the bear numbers are considerably

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1 lower to the east in the Brooks Range.

2

3 The Arctic Refuge has also provided
4 funding for the villages of Kaktovik and Arctic Village
5 to participate in the Arctic Borderlands Ecological
6 Knowledge Co-op. The Co-op's a collaboration of Native
7 communities, comanagement bodies, government agencies and
8 university scientists from across the range of the
9 Porcupine Caribou Herd and its near-shore marine
10 environment. The primary goal of the co-op is to monitor
11 the ecosystem to see what it changing and why. No
12 management decisions or advocacy positions are taken.
13 The co-op's role is to develop and share information
14 about ecosystems for decision-makers to use. A key part
15 of the co-op is its community monitoring program in which
16 local individuals are hired to interview community
17 members and to present a summary of their findings at the
18 annual co-op gathering. This gathering is attended by
19 community members, scientists and others from across the
20 region. And this years gathering will be next week in
21 Ft. McPherson, Northwest Territories.

22

23 The Service also provided logistical
24 support for the Department of Fish and Game's study on
25 size and stock characterization of dolly varden
26 subsistence fishery by residents of Kaktovik, Anaktuvuk
27 Pass and Nuiqsut. We provided airplane supports during
28 '99 and likely will provide that support again in 2002.

29

30 In regard to field work that we have
31 planned for this year, again, we plan to do the Atigun
32 dall sheep sex and age composition survey. That's a
33 ground based survey and also we'll follow that up with an
34 aerial survey in June of the Upper Sag River and Atigun
35 River to the Pipeline corridor.

36

37 We're planning to do a survey of Arctic
38 fox dens in the Canning River Delta. This will be the
39 first time that we've attempted this trying to get a
40 handle on the fox population in that portion of the
41 Refuge.

42

43 We just found out that we obtained some
44 challenge cost share money to begin to look at
45 contaminants in Arctic char in the subsistence fishery or
46 subsistence caught fish at Kaktovik. This challenge cost
47 share was only for \$1,000, so what we will do is collect
48 some samples from those subsistence caught fish and we'll
49 help to train the local residents in how to take samples
50 and then the samples that are taken this year will be

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1 preserved for analysis later on.

2

3 In regard to muskox, we're planning to do
4 the herd composition survey and distribution survey in
5 late March or early April. There'll be a precalving
6 census, total count of the muskox on the Refuge. And
7 then in June, we will go out and collar a few more female
8 muskox. Right now our collar numbers are down to about
9 only three to five animals that currently have working
10 collars. So we'll attempt to recapture those animals,
11 remove the collars and to collar some younger female
12 animals that we can track for several years. And then in
13 June we'll be doing on the ground composition counts of
14 muskox herds and overflights to look at caribou and
15 muskox interactions as that's been a concern. We'll
16 also, in May, be looking at bear predation on muskox in
17 the area around the Canning River as Department of Fish
18 and Game has some marked bears -- or collared bears in
19 that area and we'll be tracking those and looking for
20 signs of predation on the muskox.

21

22 In terms of work on caribou, within the
23 next couple of weeks we'll be traveling to Dawson and
24 working with the Canadians to collar some additional
25 Porcupine Herd caribou to try to maintain the number of
26 working collars at around 80 animals which would give us
27 an adequate sample of the females within that herd.
28 We'll be working with the Department of Fish and Game
29 working out of Coldfoot tracking Central Arctic caribou
30 that are wintering south of the Brooks Range -- or on the
31 south side of the Brooks Range and collaring some of
32 those individuals as well. And that will be the end of
33 February, first of March or so. And then late May, early
34 June, we'll be working with the Department of Fish and
35 Game and keeping tabs on the spring migration of the
36 Porcupine Caribou Herd and then in late June, again,
37 checking out the early calf survival for the Porcupine
38 Caribou Herd.

39

40 In mid-April we'll be doing the North
41 Slope moose survey from the Dalton Highway to the Canning
42 River and, again, looking at the moose population to see
43 if it is increasing any.

44

45 So that's kind of a summary of the
46 activities that we did this past year and those
47 activities that we have planned for the coming year and
48 I'd be happy to entertain any questions you might have.

49

50 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. Any

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1 questions. Terry.

2

3 MR. TAGAROOK: When you had the caribou
4 count, did you do it on the Alaska side or the Canadian
5 side?

6

7 MR. WHEELER: Yeah, the caribou count was
8 done on the Alaska side. It was done within the Arctic
9 Refuge. When the animals are grouped fairly tightly then
10 we'll fly over and take aerial photographs of the herd.

11

12 MR. TAGAROOK: Yeah, the caribou that we
13 have up here on the Slope, you know, they have done their
14 fall migration and have gone down and some are staying.
15 We even have caribou on the runways, sometimes the planes
16 have to buzz over them to scare them off the runways.

17

18 MR. WHEELER: Thank you.

19

20 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Mr. Wheeler.

21

22 MR. TAGAROOK: Mr. Chair, I feel
23 uncomfortable without a quorum. I think we should recess
24 until tomorrow and see if one of our guys will be coming
25 in.

26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Terry. I
28 guess there's concern about making presentation of these
29 reports without the quorum being here and having to
30 decide later if we need to take any action items on these
31 issues regarding the proposals. I think it would be
32 appropriate to have the Council members present.

33

34 Mr. Yokel.

35

36 MR. YOKEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We
37 have a presentation to make that's informational only and
38 won't require any action items. And Bob Schneider's here
39 to do that and I think he has some other appointments
40 tomorrow, so if we could do that after lunch that would
41 benefit us, at least.

42

43 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What time is it now? I
44 don't have my watch with me.

45

46 MR. YOKEL: It's noon right now.

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I guess we'll recess
49 for lunch and proceed from there. It's 12:00, the lunch
50 hour now, if that's okay with you?

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1 MR. YOKEL: You're the Chairman.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I guess we'll go that
4 route and come back about 1:30.

5

6 MR. YOKEL: Okay, thank you, Mr.
7 Chairman.

8

9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

10

11 (Off record)

12

13 (On record)

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good afternoon
16 everybody. We'll call the meeting back to order of the
17 North Slope Regional Advisory Council. It's about 1:30
18 or 1:40 in the afternoon, I don't have my watch with me.
19 Anyway, we have Bob Schneider with NPR-A.

20

21 MR. YOKEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Dr. Yokel.

24

25 MR. YOKEL: I'm Dave Yokel, a wildlife
26 biologist with the Bureau of Land Management in
27 Fairbanks. I don't have much at all to say today.
28 Anything that I do in the way of population management in
29 NPR-A I do cooperatively with the North Slope Borough and
30 Fish and Game and Geoff Carroll will be presenting that
31 stuff a little bit later.

32

33 As you know, though, we do have an active
34 oil and gas program once again with NNPR-A. And although
35 that brings some impacts to subsistence activities and it
36 also brings an increased workload to us in the BLM, this
37 time there's actually a little positive aspect going
38 along with that in that there's funding to hire some new
39 people. And so I just wanted to let you know that I'm in
40 the process right now of hiring an additional wildlife
41 biologist to help me out with my duties. And also hiring
42 a subsistence specialist, which is really a first for BLM
43 in Alaska in terms of somebody who will do harvest
44 documentation-type of studies similar to what Sverre
45 Pedersen does; you're familiar with his work. And so
46 both of those people and especially the subsistence
47 specialist you will be seeing here in the future,
48 hopefully -- well, by your next meeting next fall. And
49 so we'll have some additional help and expertise that we
50 don't have at all right now.

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1 So with that I will just hand the mike to
2 Bob here -- Mike and Bob and -- and I'll stick around in
3 case there's any questions that I can help out with
4 afterwards.

5
6 MR. SCHNEIDER: Well, thank you, Dave.
7 Mr. Chairman, members of the Council, for the record my
8 name is Bob Schneider. I'm the field manager for the
9 Northern Field Office for the Bureau of Land Management
10 in Fairbanks. I'm here today to give you a little update
11 on planning and environmental review process that we have
12 initiated in the northwest portion of the National
13 Petroleum Reserve-Alaska or Northwest NPR-A. If I could
14 have the lights, Taylor, you want to turn the lights
15 down? The switch.

16
17 What I'd like to do is give you a
18 background of the planning effort as we envision it and
19 then to give you a status report of where we are. We've
20 held some scoping meetings throughout the North Slope
21 Borough and wanted to talk a little bit about what the
22 results of those initial scoping meetings have been.

23
24 Why are we developing a plan for
25 Northwest NPR-A? For a variety of reasons, but I think
26 our marching orders came directly from the top. The
27 President in his inaugural -- not his inaugural address,
28 first State of the Union address had some goals and
29 objectives that he wanted to define for the American
30 public and one of them had to do with natural resource
31 development. And in his speech he talked about that
32 American must have an energy policy that plans for future
33 but meets the needs of today; I believe that we can
34 develop our natural resources and protect our
35 environment. And pursuant to that speech he formed an
36 energy development policy council headed up by Vice
37 President Chaney, and one of the recommendations that
38 came out of that report said that the President should
39 direct the Secretary of the Interior to consider
40 additional environmentally responsible oil and gas
41 development based on sound science and the best available
42 technology through further lease sales in the National
43 Petroleum Reserve-Alaska, and that such consideration
44 should include areas not currently leased within the
45 northeast portion of NPR-A. And as you're aware the area
46 that was opened up for leasing in 1999 would be northeast
47 NPR-A, so they were directing us to hold an additional
48 lease sale -- a second lease sale in that area and there
49 is a lease sale scheduled for this coming summer.

50

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1 Well, where is the planning area? It
2 covers much of NPR-A. Three villages are directly
3 involved, the village of Wainwright, Atkasuk and Barrow,
4 the three villages that are actually represented here
5 today. We also held scoping meetings over in Point Lay
6 and Anaktuvuk Pass and in Nuiqsut as part of the process.
7 In terms of the area itself, it's a little less than 10
8 million acres. And of this total, slightly more, about
9 9.4 million acres is under Federal ownership and about a
10 half million acres is under private ownership, Native
11 Corporation allotments and village allotments. The
12 boundary was selected as a result of industry interest in
13 the area. If you recall infrastructure for oil and gas
14 development is just to the east of NPR-A and so there was
15 interest in northeast NPR-A for development. And so as
16 we go farther to the west, now that -- there's
17 exploration that's been going on in northeast NPR-A
18 there's interest to move farther to the west. There's
19 also some fairly good geological information that's been
20 collected and we'll probably talk later about some
21 additional 3-D seismic work that's been going on but
22 there's some favorable geological information available
23 that leads industry to think that there may be some oil
24 and gas potential in northwest NPR-A.

25
26 There's also been local political
27 interest. I remember in this very room sitting down in a
28 meeting with community leaders and our director and one
29 of the things that Mayor Ammowak said when he first stood
30 up and said, when are you going to lease west of
31 Teshekpuk Lake so he's interested and the Borough is very
32 interested in leasing and looking at areas outside
33 northeast NPR-A.

34
35 And finally, there's a lot of favorable
36 or similar physical and environmental characteristics
37 that we considered when we looked at the area. And just
38 to go back to the map, one of the issues that's come up
39 and one of the reasons why we looked at an area with a
40 lot of coast line is because originally in northeast NPR-
41 A it was envisioned that ice roads would be the mode of
42 access to get to drilling locations in northeast NPR-A,
43 but as we get farther and farther west, access by ice
44 road becomes cost prohibitive and so we are looking at
45 alternative ways of being able to get there and we wanted
46 to make sure that in the analysis that we did we looked
47 at all different kinds of access, primarily looking at
48 staging locations over the summer or looking at access
49 via the coast or from village locations coming into NPR-
50 A. So we wanted to at least look at that and consider

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1 that.

2

3 We held a series of eight scoping
4 meetings in Alaska over the months of December, January
5 and February. And in those meetings we asked the public
6 for help in defining what the concerns and issues were to
7 be addressed in that plan and we were seeking that
8 information to help us make better decisions and also to
9 allow us better information to evaluate the effects of
10 those decisions. Scoping is really sort of a first free
11 shot. We don't have a preconceived notion of what this
12 plan will look like or what the decisions will be. This
13 is really an opportunity for the public to tell us what
14 things are of a concern to them that we should consider
15 in the planning effort. Now, we have some experience
16 with northeast NPR-A, and so we were carrying that
17 experience into the northwest plan. And these are issues
18 that we know we're going to discuss. We're going to
19 discuss oil and gas leasing, as the President's speech
20 and the Chaney report said that we should look at oil and
21 gas leasing and certainly oil and gas leasing is the
22 driving force for the plan. But there are other issues
23 that this council is very interested in and that's
24 subsistence and fish and wildlife management and
25 protection. Access to those resources for hunting, for
26 subsistence use and trapping.

27

28 We do have people that recreate in NPR-A,
29 primarily all on the Colville River but there are people
30 that come out here and I know that there are -- I see
31 brochures about Tundra Tours and bringing people in and
32 looking at the North Slope, and so there is a certain
33 amount of recreation and tourism that goes on and so
34 that's something that we know we need to consider.

35

36 Threatened and endangered species. Of
37 course, the issue of speckled and stellar eiders,
38 probably at the forefront, but there may be other species
39 that are threatened or endangered that we certainly need
40 to consider in this planning effort. Historic and
41 cultural resources. Soil, water and air resources.
42 Vegetation. Special areas were designated by the
43 Secretary of the Interior back in 1977, there are three
44 special areas in NPR-A, the Colville River, the Teshekpuk
45 Lake Special Area and Ukwuplands (ph) Special Area. The
46 northwest planning area has bits and pieces of the
47 Colville River and Teshekpuk Lake Special area, so we
48 know we're going to have to discuss that because we've
49 gotten a lot of pressure from individuals primarily
50 outside of the North Slope that are vitally concerned

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1 about special areas.

2

3 Three areas that are new to this planning
4 effort are looking at wilderness, wild and scenic rivers
5 and off highway vehicle management. These were three
6 issues that weren't really discussed in any great detail
7 in the northeast plan but we're looking at wilderness
8 because on January 19th, Secretary Babbitt, before he
9 left office, directed us that in all planning efforts
10 that we do in Alaska, that he was rescinding a memo that
11 Secretary Wadd had written back in 1980 telling us that
12 we wouldn't look at wilderness, Secretary Babbitt said we
13 would look at wilderness as we went forward with new
14 planning efforts. So we're bound to that policy. In
15 terms of rivers, the Colville River has been studied for
16 wild and scenic river status but there are other rivers
17 like the Ikpiuk and the Meade and some of the others on
18 the North Slope that have never really been looked at in
19 any serious fashion and so we feel like we're responsible
20 to at least take a look at wild and scenic rivers and
21 make some decisions about that.

22

23 And the final one, off highway vehicle
24 management, this is a -- I'll characterize this, this is
25 different than access. If somebody takes off and goes
26 out and plays on a snowmachine or takes a motorcycle or
27 an ATV out on public lands and they're not out there
28 hunting, and they're actually on Federal lands, that's
29 off highway vehicles. It's a casual recreational use of
30 vehicles. And our national policy says that we'll manage
31 off highway vehicle travel. So while it's not so much of
32 an issue here on the North Slope because most off highway
33 vehicle travel takes place probably on Native Corporation
34 land around villages, it's an issue that at least we have
35 to address in our planning. We may later on consider it
36 not to be an issue but at least going into this we're
37 going to have to look at it.

38

39 There were two issues that we said we
40 were not going to address in this plan; first is mining.
41 All of NPR-A is withdrawn or not -- the mining laws don't
42 apply in NPR-A, it was withdrawn in 1923. And those
43 withdrawals have been subsequently continued by Congress
44 in later legislation. And the second thing was mineral
45 leasing for solid energy minerals, coal, would not be
46 considered in this plan. Now, we do have some small
47 individual permits that we issue for coal for personal
48 use for fire heating use in homes. That's not what we're
49 talking about here. We're talking about large scale coal
50 leasing will not be considered in this plan because,

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1 again, mineral leasing was forbidden when the area was
2 withdrawn from mineral entry.

3

4 Our tentative schedule, I have a more
5 detailed schedule, but our tentative schedule, we're here
6 in February of 2002 and we're just now starting the
7 planning and environmental impact statement process. We
8 held our scoping meetings, as I said, the latter part of
9 2001 and into 2002 and we're just now starting to look at
10 some inventory information and starting to conceptually
11 develop alternatives that we want to look at in the
12 environmental impact statement. And then we hope to be
13 completed sometime around December of 2003. Again,
14 talked about oil and gas leasing, you know, the driving
15 force of this plan, driving issue that was driving this
16 plan was oil and gas leasing and we're hoping to have a
17 lease sale sometime and somewhere within northwest NPR-A
18 around the middle or 2004. And if we keep on schedule,
19 try to do a leasing about every two years. So that's our
20 tentative schedule. Looking at it in a little more
21 detail, we're actually on about the third line,
22 identifying issues, scoping and analyzing scoping
23 comments. Our next effort and I'll talk a little bit
24 about that as we go -- as we talk about the status
25 report. But we hope to hold a subsistence workshop in
26 conjunction with the next subsistence advisory panel
27 meeting that's scheduled here in Barrow for the 13th and
28 14th of March. We'll then prepare a draft EIS, get the
29 notice of availability out sometime toward the end of
30 this year with a draft EIS ready to go for public
31 hearings and back to the public in December. Final plan,
32 we hope to have sometime around September of 2003 and
33 then final notice of lease sale in November of 2003 and
34 finishing that up somewhere around March, and then if we
35 hold a lease sale it will be sometime around the middle
36 of May of 2004. So that's a more detailed schedule.

37

38 So will we hold future lease sales in the
39 northwest NPR-A? I mean, I have to say I don't know. We
40 hope to. But we don't know where and we don't know when.
41 Our goal is to look to see to determine where it might be
42 most appropriate to do so. Will we consider sensitive
43 environmental areas and resources when we make those
44 decisions? Certainly we're bound by law to do that and
45 we're going to take the time to study this. We know it's
46 a relatively fast track plan but I think we've got the
47 ability to be able to look at the sensitive resources of
48 NPR-A and to make some decisions on leasing.

49

50 In terms of subsistence, will we consider

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1 the subsistence needs of the people of the North Slope
2 when making decisions? Certainly. We're required by law
3 to do that but that's probably the least important
4 reason. I mean the reason we're here today, the reason
5 we have a subsistence advisory panel and all the work
6 that we've done to try to work with the North Slope
7 communities, we know that many people are dependent upon
8 the resources that come out of NPR-A and it's something
9 that we must do to keep the faith with the people of the
10 North Slope. But we also know that we have other
11 mandates and so we are going to consider the needs of the
12 people of the North Slope and their subsistence needs
13 when we make decisions.

14

15 As far as a status report, we had eight
16 scoping meetings. Here was the attendance, we had a
17 total of about almost 140 folks in those eight scoping
18 meetings. If you break it down into affiliations, you
19 can see that the oil industry was representative, we had
20 media, environmental organizations, Native Corporations,
21 State and local government, some Federal agencies. It
22 looks sort of like this meeting, there was more folks
23 from the agencies than there were people at the meetings
24 but that's rather a common occurrence, I guess.

25

26 Observations. A couple of -- when I show
27 you what we actually found, there's a couple of things
28 that I think we need to consider first. First, is that
29 we presented issues to the public during these meetings
30 and told them that we would consider them. I suspect
31 that if we had not done that we would have gotten folks
32 that would have raised those issues themselves, so when
33 you read through the scoping comments, there's probably
34 not a lot of issues -- even though we know wilderness,
35 for example, is going to be a major issue, we said it was
36 already and so, therefore, we didn't get a lot of
37 comments about wilderness. It wasn't because it was not
38 important it was because we said that we were going to
39 study it. And I think the second thing is, is that the
40 comment period ended last Friday and so we expect to get
41 written comments between -- over the next few weeks and
42 sometimes those comments are a whole lot more detailed.
43 So the comments we got were basically from the people
44 speaking at the meeting or providing us with some written
45 information.

46

47 General observations thus far, we haven't
48 seen any issues that have come forward that would
49 ultimately drive us to develop a new planning
50 alternative. So we're going to -- and that's one of the

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1 things we were looking for, is if we had -- somebody said
2 -- well, let's say somebody from the scientific community
3 came up and said that they discovered a new endangered
4 species somewhere in the northwest NPR-A, that might
5 drive an alternative or at least drive us in a different
6 direction as we went forward. We didn't get anything
7 like that that would cause us to look at a different
8 alternative. We did have a general observation. There
9 was a universal concern expressed by the people of the
10 North Slope, that they wanted their subsistence lifestyle
11 protected from oil and gas leasing, exploration and
12 development. But there was a similar concern expressed
13 by others as a result of other land use allocations, such
14 as wilderness. I think that came out of the Wainwright
15 meeting. We had a couple of people talking about access
16 concerns and that they heard that there were problems
17 with people being able to access wilderness areas if they
18 were designated for subsistence use. And so there was a
19 concern with the protection of subsistence lifestyle on
20 the North Slope, and that was pretty much a universal
21 concern.

22

23 The comments we received, questions about
24 the scope of the plan, how we were going to make
25 decisions and I have some detailed information but I
26 won't go into all of it here. But need for more
27 development, assessment -- realistic assessment,
28 development scenarios. We ought to be able to learn from
29 northeast NPR-A in terms of how the development has taken
30 place thus far, the exploration patterns and seismic work
31 and all the work that went on since the last lease sale.
32 I think there was some belief that we underestimated the
33 interest of the oil industry in 1999 and so therefore
34 what we need to do is we need to take a more realistic
35 look as we move into northwest NPR-A and use that
36 information to our benefit.

37

38 There was confusion over the boundary of
39 northwest NPR-A study area in relation to the Colville
40 special area. We are in the process of developing a
41 management plan for the Colville River Special area, that
42 was part of the record of decision for northeast NPR-A.
43 And there's an area that overlaps and there was some
44 confusion that came up in the meetings about that.

45

46 Just a general concern over the planning
47 and permitting process and what we go through when we
48 issue permits for oil and gas exploration and, ultimately
49 development. And there was some concerns over that. I
50 think people felt that some of the decisions that we

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1 would make in this plan would be real detailed kinds of
2 decisions and what we're talking about is potentially
3 leasing certain areas for oil and gas exploration but
4 that ultimately could lead to development and there are
5 subsequent processes that we have to go through.

6
7 And the final issue that came up and it
8 was really only one person or two people in the meeting
9 in Fairbanks, a concern of an issue over State's rights
10 and the allocation of royalties that occur within NPR-A
11 versus other places in the state.

12
13 So where do we go from here? Well, I
14 told you that I would go back to the schedule, we have a
15 subsistence panel meeting scheduled for the 13th and 14th
16 of March and we hope to hold a subsistence workshop as
17 part of that. I see that Mr. Bodfish from Atkasuk who is
18 on the subsistence advisory panel and I know Mr. Brower
19 is an alternate but what we're hoping to do is be able to
20 bring some additional people in from outlying communities
21 to be able to sit down and talk about what their issues
22 are in northwest NPR-A so we can further scope out some
23 of the issues and concerns and use that as a method to do
24 that. Use our subsistence panel as a way of being able
25 to evaluate that. And this was our first panel, there's
26 a few familiar faces and a few faces that are no longer
27 with us. But it's been a good panel, it's been a good
28 source of information and I think it's going to be more
29 valuable as we go forward and get into, not only new
30 leasing areas, but development as well.

31
32 And with that, I'd be happy to entertain
33 any questions you might have about the plan or anything
34 else that you might be on your mind that BLM would be
35 involved in. So if I could get the lights, Taylor, could
36 you.

37
38 Mr. Chairman, any questions.

39
40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions to Bob,
41 Terry or Paul. I'm trying to take notes at the same time
42 here.

43
44 MR. SCHNEIDER: Sure.

45
46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Ask him lots of
47 questions.

48
49 MR. TAGAROOK: I think I asked him
50 questions in Wainwright when we had that meeting and I

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1 haven't thought of anything else.

2

3 MR. SCHNEIDER: Okay.

4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Paul.

6

7 MR. BODFISH: Yeah, do you have any
8 people doing any studies on the caribou at this time with
9 the Pipeline situation out there?

10

11 MR. SCHNEIDER: I'm going to let Dave
12 answer that since he was reaching for the microphone. We
13 do have some caribou studies that are scheduled for this
14 year. We have actually four studies but I'll let Dave
15 talk specifically about the caribou study. But we are
16 initiating a contaminants, baseline contaminant study
17 west of Nuiqsut in anticipation and planning for
18 potential development there. Caribou study, migration
19 study -- caribou migration movement study. Hydrologic
20 study looking at long-term water movement through NPR-A.
21 And then the final study was a subsistence harvest study
22 that Mr. Yokel talked about in terms of hiring a new
23 individual. We also are hiring a new hydrologist and
24 another person to do some of our on site monitoring of
25 existing and planned oil and gas operations so there'll
26 be somebody else up here doing actually on the ground
27 monitoring.

28

29 But Dave, do you want to talk about the
30 caribou.

31

32 MR. YOKEL: Paul, if you're referring to
33 any studies to look at caribou movement relative to
34 Pipelines, is that what you're talking about?

35

36 MR. BODFISH: Yeah. Summertime, with the
37 insect relief, you know, they don't mind that Pipeline
38 because they mostly have their head down when they're
39 traveling during that insect relief time.

40

41 MR. YOKEL: Well, first the Pipeline. We
42 don't have any pipelines yet in NPR-A so we're not doing
43 any studies relative to that. Although I've worked on
44 studies of pipelines and caribou movement back in 1980,
45 and they've been going on since that time, non-stop. The
46 general consensus, I think, of biologists is that we now
47 know enough about proper mitigation that we don't think
48 there's any significant impact to caribou movement from
49 pipelines if they're built properly nowadays, in the
50 summertime. There's still some question about the

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1 wintertime although with the Central Arctic Herd, where
2 the pipelines are there usually aren't many caribou
3 around that area in the wintertime.

4

5 As far as migratory pathways of Teshekpuk
6 Caribou and their distribution during the insect season.
7 We have been working cooperatively with the Alaska
8 Department of Fish and Game and North Slope Borough since
9 1990. We've collected a pretty fair bit of satellite
10 collar data in that time. We just hired a contractor a
11 couple of years ago to put together all that data and
12 analyze them and put the results in a report and we just
13 got that report this winter. It was just finalized. And
14 so we do have some pretty good information on how the
15 Teshekpuk Caribou Herd uses its summer range, including
16 during the mosquito season and the fly season immediately
17 afterwards. And it's mostly up -- it's pretty well
18 concentrated north of Teshekpuk Lake during the mosquito
19 season and then they move out to the east and west a
20 little bit during the fly season later in the summer but
21 still remaining close to the coast.

22

23 Does that answer your question?

24

25 MR. BODFISH: Yeah.

26

27 MR. YOKEL: Mr. Chairman.

28

29 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Dave

30

31 MR. YOKEL: There was a question earlier
32 this morning about what issues have come up in our
33 subsistence advisory panel meetings and I could address
34 that very quickly. This panel has been meeting now for a
35 little over two years, I think. And we've been having
36 three or four meetings a year, roughly. And there are
37 quite a few issues that have come up.

38

39 One of the first ones was the issue of
40 whether or not seismic exploration, vibriosis equipment
41 on top of lake ice has any impact on the fish down below.
42 And a study of the noise that's produced by that was
43 conducted and we have not yet connected those results to
44 any impact on fish. Another concern about lakes and fish
45 is the withdrawal of water from lakes in the wintertime
46 for the construction of ice roads. We've been looking at
47 water withdrawal, water level, water chemistry in the
48 winter. So far we have no indication that there's any
49 problem resulting from that water withdrawal.

50

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1 Another concern we have is with caribou
2 being displaced by activities, whether it be seismic
3 activity in the winter or the fear that, especially in
4 Nuiqsut, where they could presumably be encircled by oil
5 development within a few years. They're concerned about
6 whether or not caribou will still use the areas that
7 Nuiqsut hunters prefer to hunt in.

8
9 We've had an issue of aircraft
10 overflights. There's a lot of helicopter traffic in the
11 summertime with all the various studies going on and this
12 sometimes conflicts with hunting activities; most
13 recently with some waterfowl hunting last spring. There
14 was an issue there.

15
16 That's probably the most obvious.
17 There's probably some others I'm forgetting, you could
18 fill in Bob.

19
20 MR. SCHNEIDER: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. One
21 of the issues that came up at the last subsistence
22 meeting that we had here in Barrow in December had to do
23 with the seismic crews. They ask us -- there's a
24 consultation process which is mandated in the record of
25 decision for northeast NPR-A that talks about if you're
26 farther than 1,200 feet away from a subsistence cabin or
27 campsite, that, you know, you can operate without having
28 to go through a formal consultation. But if you're
29 within 1,200 feet it required that people be consulted.
30 And so the seismic companies were asking us specifically,
31 well, what is that process and of course we hadn't been
32 confronted with it before so it was a good time to be
33 able to bring that up to the subsistence panel. And what
34 we worked out at that meeting, which I thought was a
35 reasonable approach and so therefore I gave the go ahead,
36 was that the companies would utilize the cabin and
37 campsite inventory that the North Slope Borough has
38 collected to get names and addressees of people that were
39 the registered owners of these cabin sites. Contacted
40 them by mail to let them know that the seismic activity
41 was going to take place sometime during the next few
42 months as they were going to be in the area. And then
43 also that the companies were required to hire a
44 subsistence representative that would be on-site. And
45 one of the jobs of the subsistence rep would have would
46 be to contact either through Nuiqsut or if it was on the
47 west side of the Ikpiuk River to contact Barrow, and I
48 believe they were working through Ikias (ph) to let
49 people know where the seismic operation was at any
50 particular time so that people could make some decisions

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1 on their own as to whether to go to their cabin at some
2 point in time if they knew that there was going to be
3 seismic activity and potential conflict or whether to
4 delay their trip until the seismic operation had passed
5 on through. And then the third thing that the
6 representative would do, the subsistence rep would do is
7 that when they encountered a cabin or encountered a known
8 campsite location is that that individual would virtually
9 stand guard and keep anybody that was involved with the
10 seismic operation from going in. There was no reason
11 that they needed to be there but what they wanted to do
12 was protect the interest of whoever had their cabin or
13 campsite there and just to make sure that things were
14 okay. Now, that's not to say that they were security
15 guards for those sites but at least it wasn't going to be
16 the seismic operation that was going to cause any damage.
17 And so, in doing that we felt that that was probably a
18 reasonable approach. They had to be out there to do
19 their seismic work, we were trying to minimize the
20 impacts to the people that had cabin sites out there
21 since it was done in the dead of winter and it wasn't
22 done during the time when a lot of people may be there at
23 campsites or when they may be fishing or something like
24 that. So we felt like that was a reasonable approach and
25 that's what the panel -- made the recommendation to us
26 and I accepted that. So it's my understanding in
27 speaking to people from Ikias and speaking to industry
28 and when I was up here a couple of weeks ago for a
29 coordination meeting is that it seems to be working and
30 people seem to be kept informed. Now, there may be other
31 folks that aren't informed and I guess would ask the
32 Council for some recommendations as to how we might be
33 able to get that information out to folks that may not
34 have a cabin out there but travel on out there to trap or
35 to hunt and how we can get that information to them.
36 Because we've tried everything that we could since the
37 record of decision really focused in on cabin sites. But
38 if there's people that are going out to hunt that aren't
39 involved with using a cabin, we just need to come up with
40 some ideas as to how we can make sure that people know.

41

42 Part of the problem is, is that the
43 seismic operations are -- some of them are proprietary
44 information. The companies don't want other companies to
45 know where they're looking. And so to be able to -- I
46 mean they'll know where they're looking because they fly
47 over them and they can see them. But they don't want to
48 publicize in writing as to where they are. And so,
49 therefore, we had to work it out with the seismic
50 companies that are doing proprietary work to, at least,

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1 give some general geologic -- or geographical location to
2 people to know where they are. They're at the Ikpikpuk
3 River or they're at some butte or they're at some
4 location where people would recognize without giving a
5 township and a legal description which might then give
6 away some information that they're trying to collect. So
7 it's been sort of a sensitive issue but we also recognize
8 the fact that in good faith we need to let people know
9 where the seismic operations are working.

10

11 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Bob. I have
12 a couple of questions. In regards to your information --
13 getting information out to the communities that are being
14 affected, you know, participating in several city council
15 meetings would probably be one way of getting information
16 out just to let the community know that this operation is
17 going on at this certain time. You know, it would be one
18 avenue to try. And the other one would be, we have local
19 channels on our TV that are used for, you know, reading
20 information. Probably using that would be another option
21 for you folks to think about. Just getting that
22 information as to being advertised that this activity is
23 going to be going on for a certain amount of period. You
24 don't have to give -- just give a general idea of where
25 the activity is going to be occurring. Those would be
26 two things that I could think of right off the bat.

27

28 MR. SCHNEIDER: I agree with you. When
29 we had the panel meeting here it was the middle of
30 December, both seismic companies were working in the
31 area, Western GECO and Fairweather both gave
32 presentations and, of course, we made announcements in
33 the local media about those meetings and I guess the
34 other thing I would say, too, is that the subsistence
35 advisory panel which represents the Native tribal
36 government or, in your case, represents the North Slope
37 Borough government, but that's another venue to be able
38 to get information out and so I would hope that maybe in
39 combination with maybe talking to city councils, getting
40 some information on the local TV stations, radio
41 stations, that that might work. But we probably need to
42 be a little more effective, too, in terms of the
43 subsistence panel in making sure that people know what's
44 being discussed and then also that the panel members can
45 go back to their local villages and be able to
46 communicate that information.

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I know from being on
49 the panel as an alternate member and participating in the
50 meetings, that was one of the things that was some

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1 positive thoughts coming out of that from the community
2 itself and having to go out and do their hunting before
3 the activity started, where our resources were closer and
4 more available to them. And that was one of the positive
5 things that I seen when.....

6

7 MR. SCHNEIDER: Sure.

8

9 CHAIRMAN BROWER:the industry and
10 BLM went out to coordinate efforts with the community
11 that was going to be affected. And that was a positive
12 sign that I seen just from being part of the meeting in
13 the community in Nuiqsut.

14

15 I think the other issue I wanted to talk
16 about was in regards to your considering staging areas
17 further west. Did you have any areas identified as to
18 when or where you're going to be staging?

19

20 MR. SCHNEIDER: No. I'll say that this
21 summer there's a proposal -- actually we've received --
22 we haven't received the formal proposal yet, we're just
23 sort of in the discussion stages. But west of Teshekpuk
24 Lake, Phillips is proposing this summer, this coming
25 summer to actually construct an ice pad -- an insulated
26 ice pad and be able to store a drill rig over the summer
27 near the Ikpikpuk River. They have leases on the west
28 side of the Ikpikpuk River and basically just be unit
29 stored there. There may be an occasional person who goes
30 out there to check on it but it will all be pretty well
31 self-contained. And they're hoping to have it fairly
32 close to the location that they want to drill the
33 following winter. But what that will do is it will allow
34 them almost a month or month and a half advance time
35 rather than having to build ice roads or to transport by
36 rollagon out to that site because it is kind of remote.

37

38 Now, in terms of northwest NPR-A, we're
39 recognizing that this is an issue that the industry has.
40 So that's the reason why we made sure that the remainder
41 of the coastline of northwest -- or the rest of northwest
42 NPR-A and NPR-A itself would at least be looked at as the
43 potential for being able to barge something in in the
44 winter -- or the summertime and store it somewhere close
45 by and then be able to transport it a shorter distance
46 inland rather than having to rely on building ice roads
47 all the way from Nuiqsut to -- it's an expensive process,
48 it's about a million dollars a mile and when you start
49 talking about 80 miles away, it's a -- it may make a well
50 -- an exploratory well, make or break that cost, but if

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1 you could store it there over the summer -- there's some
2 downsides to it, it cost money to store a rig but they've
3 got a couple of rigs here in Alaska now that can actually
4 be broken down and transported by rollagon so that's what
5 they're planning on doing but we haven't received the
6 proposal yet and then we'll be in consultation with local
7 cabin owners in the area to make sure that there's not
8 going to be any conflict with them. But we haven't
9 identified any locations with the exception of maybe this
10 one which may be on the old Ikpiukuk drill site. There's
11 a couple of old drill sites that were done back in the
12 '70s and '80s. I'm not sure exactly when but there were
13 a couple of old drill sites and some pads but they were
14 planning on building an ice pad and insulate it and then
15 store that unit on top of it.

16

17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: In regards to the
18 scoping meetings, you mentioned that you're just starting
19 to inventory information and there's a whole bunch of
20 items listed and I meant to note one of them down but it
21 just went by a little too quick and it.....

22

23 MR. SCHNEIDER: Sure.

24

25 CHAIRMAN BROWER:was in regards to
26 the campsites and there's other areas that probably need
27 to be considered as traditional land use areas that don't
28 have the campsites on them. These are hunting areas that
29 are used just seasonally. I think that needs to be
30 included sometime.

31

32 MR. SCHNEIDER: Well, Terry was talking
33 about the visit to Wainwright. They were very, very
34 helpful in providing -- I think we ended up purchasing
35 it, but they provided us with a document that they call,
36 passing on the knowledge, I believe it was called and I
37 know we've spoken to Ikias and spoken to the Heritage
38 Center about other traditional land use information
39 that's on record and we do have some of that information
40 as well from the northeast NPR-A study. But, yes, when I
41 mentioned historic and cultural resources, that certainly
42 falls into that category that those are areas that we
43 need to take a look at, and, in fact, I have a meeting
44 tomorrow with the planning department and talk about
45 their subsistence management zones and some of the
46 thoughts that the North Slope Borough may have in terms
47 of how they want to look at that and how they want us to
48 look at those areas and see where we can make our plans
49 compatible as we move forward. So you're correct. And
50 we will be looking at that information.

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1 There is quite a body of information out
2 now but that's one of the reasons why we're asking the
3 scoping questions.

4
5 MR. YOKE: Mr. Chairman, if I could, I
6 would that that doesn't, you know, we get all that
7 information -- that doesn't mean we'll get it all right
8 and there is a draft stage of the EIS and certainly the
9 Borough's planning department and wildlife department
10 will be very involved in reviewing that draft just like
11 they were for northeast NPR-A. But I think it would be
12 really great if within some of the villages, if city
13 councils or tribal councils or whatever appropriate
14 groups could get together and I know those are pretty
15 intimidating documents but look through the parts that
16 are relevant to them and if they need help, maybe give us
17 a call, maybe somebody can come up and help them go
18 through it and make sure that the information that's
19 important to the local people is in there so that we can
20 consider it when we get to writing the final EIS and
21 making a decision.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: That would be a good
24 point to continue on bringing that information to the
25 city councils and reviewing some of those documents, or
26 part of the documents that would be relevant to the
27 discussions, including their comments on that. I think
28 that would be a good starting point at some time to do
29 that because they're not all familiar with all those
30 documents, the environmental impact statements being so
31 thick and all, I don't think -- they don't have time to
32 go through the whole document. You know, from past
33 experience reviewing some of those things takes a lot of
34 time just for one person to sit down and go through the
35 document. So I think it would be -- you know, just
36 identifying with the community that's being affected, to
37 go through that process would be a good start.

38
39 MR. SCHNEIDER: Sure.

40
41 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I have another question
42 in regards to the subsistence advisory panel. It probably
43 would be a good idea to invite both the primary and
44 alternate members to that scoping meeting to help
45 disseminate some of that information, educating both the
46 primary and alternate to be present at that meeting, the
47 workshop meeting because they're always, you know, taking
48 turns and one person takes off to another meeting and the
49 alternate takes up he's not always up to speed on the
50 issues that are being addressed. So probably inviting

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1 both of them to the workshop would be.....

2

3 MR. SCHNEIDER: In fact I think we've
4 done that.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER:a good start.

7

8 MR. SCHNEIDER: Although, I'm not 100
9 percent sure. I know that the person that's responsible,
10 we've talked about that, about inviting both the primary
11 and the alternate to the meeting. But we may want some
12 additional people there that might be able to shed a
13 different perspective certainly on the issues that the
14 community has.

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Those are all the
17 comments and questions I have. Terry or Paul, do you
18 have any other comments.

19

20 MR. TAGAROOK: Just a reminder no
21 meetings on Wednesdays, it's church.

22

23 MR. YOKEL: Yeah, we wrote that down
24 after our meeting at Wainwright.

25

26 MR. SCHNEIDER: I do have to say that
27 when we started to schedule the next meetings, because of
28 what our experience was in Wainwright about that across
29 the North Slope, the no meetings on Wednesdays and we
30 were chastised for not having meetings on Wednesday, so I
31 don't know what -- it won't be a Wednesday meeting in
32 Wainwright, I can guarantee you.

33

34 One other thing I wanted to just briefly
35 mention, because I know that the Chairman has been
36 interested in it, we have finally received our charter
37 for the research and monitoring team. Secretary Norton
38 signed off on the membership of the research and
39 monitoring team on January the 15th. We have a meeting
40 scheduled for sort of an interim panel actually on Friday
41 of this week. We could not get the formal members of the
42 panel there. They had different -- their schedules had
43 some conflicts so we couldn't get them there, but we plan
44 to have a meeting subsequent to that and hope to have the
45 formal panel and the chartered -- FACA chartered panel
46 there and so that's a step in the right direction. And
47 one of the things that they're going to be looking at is
48 our research needs in NPR-A, looking at the stipulations
49 and seeing whether or not stipulations need to be
50 strengthened or need to be adjusted or changed. And this

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1 has been going on. We've had an interim research and
2 monitoring team operating for almost a year and a half
3 but it has been done informally simply because of the
4 fact that we haven't received the final charter and the
5 final membership from the Secretary. So that's a step in
6 the right direction and one of the things that we will be
7 doing with that team at some point in time, perhaps our
8 second or third meeting, is to get them together with the
9 subsistence advisory panel to look at some of the issues
10 from the traditional knowledge side and from the
11 scientific side and be able to look at how we might be
12 able to balance that out and make sure that what studies
13 we are going to go forward with make sense from both
14 traditional subsistence panel side and the research and
15 monitoring team side.

16

17 So I just wanted to let you know that we
18 had finally gotten approval. It's taken almost two years
19 to do.

20

21 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Bob. Any
22 other comments or questions.

23

24 MR. YOKEL: I have one final thought, Mr.
25 Chairman.

26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Dave.

28

29 MR. YOKEL: If you recall back to the
30 maps of NPR-A that Bob showed in his presentation you'll
31 recall that NPR-A was broken up into three sections in
32 those maps. There's a northeast NPR-A for which we have
33 a plan and have held a lease sale, northwest NPR-A for
34 which we're developing a plan and will hold a lease sale,
35 and then there's the rest of NPR-A. This administration
36 is very serious about oil development in NPR-A and as
37 soon as we're done with this northwest plan we're going
38 to be starting a plan for the rest of the NPR-A and
39 presumably could have a lease sale there in 2006. So
40 unless something changes dramatically in the oil economy,
41 oil exploration and development is here and we will need
42 to take it very seriously and pay attention to what's
43 going on so we make it happen in the best way possible.

44

45 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Dave. I
46 think I just now heard the new title for the rest of the
47 NPR-A, the rest of it.

48

49 MR. YOKEL: Yeah.

50

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It already has two
2 names to it, northeast, northwest and now the last part
3 of it is the rest of it.

4
5 MR. SCHNEIDER: It sounds like Paul
6 Harvey, the Rest of the Story.

7
8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Bob and
9 Dave. I think our following through with the rest of our
10 agenda here is we have U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
11 Fisheries Resource Office, Dave Wiswar.

12
13 MR. WISWAR: Mr. Chair, Council members.
14 My name is David Wiswar. I'm with the Fairbanks
15 Fisheries Resource Office. It's a branch of U.S. Fish
16 and Wildlife Service. What I'd like to present to you
17 today is just three issues and essentially it's
18 information for your dissemination.

19
20 In September Jeff Adams was up here, he's
21 the project leader to our office and he came back and
22 said there was some interest in the ichthyophonus
23 outbreak, or whatever you want to call it in the Yukon
24 River drainage with chinook salmon. I wasn't quite sure
25 what information you were looking for at the time but
26 there is a -- there is some information that has been
27 gathered over the last two seasons now with the
28 University of Washington. The project was paid for with
29 subsistence funds and also with the Yukon River
30 Restoration and Enhancement Fund. I bring that up as an
31 example of the types of funding that can be used for --
32 that has been used for projects as was brought out by
33 Steve Fried in his presentation, for seeking other funds
34 for subsistence work.

35
36 Ichthyophonus is a parasite. It's found
37 in Pacific herring essentially from Norton Sound down to
38 Puget Sound. It's been thought that it is a way that the
39 chinook salmon have been infected with the ichthyophonus
40 parasite. So that has been looked into as well as some
41 sampling efforts.

42
43 The ichthyophonus in the Yukon River, it
44 has a very low prevalence rate down around the Emmonak
45 area where they've been taking samples under four or five
46 percent of the chinook salmon have been seen with this.
47 There's a number of sampling sites, about nine of them
48 between Emmonak at the mouth and Whitehorse. When you
49 proceed up river to about 700 miles to Nenana, the Tanana
50 area, the incidents of the rate increases up to about 25

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1 percent. And these are on fish that you can see --
2 actually can see the difference in the flesh when they
3 are captured. The rate is somewhat higher when they look
4 at the clinical aspect of it. In other words, when they
5 do look into the flesh and raise cultures in the heart,
6 liver and flesh as well. But when it's manifested,
7 visually it's around 25 percent.

8

9 As they proceed up further when they've
10 done samples out of Whitehorse, and they've seen the
11 level dramatically. The incidence level, the supposition
12 is there that as the fish are moving up river, those that
13 have been infected are dying off and do not reach the
14 spawning ground. There's -- it's suspected that some of
15 this is -- the prevalence and the severity of the
16 infection has to do with water temperature. In 1999 they
17 had a higher water temperature in the Yukon River than --
18 well, in 2000/2001 whereas in some areas it was about 20
19 degrees centigrade, that's about 68 degrees fahrenheit,
20 this is in the Yukon River. And they found that the
21 incident level was higher during that year. Also when
22 they've looked at the incident level between late run --
23 early run fish and late run fish, the incident is higher
24 in the later run fish. Again, their temperatures tend to
25 be higher at that point.

26

27 There's some concern whether or not this
28 may be one of the reasons that is affecting fish up in
29 the Slope. There's no information on that at this point.
30 I would tend to suspect it might be something else, if
31 you look at the way it's manifested and the temperature
32 increases of 20 degrees centigrade as opposed to your
33 water temperatures on the Slope here, there's a vast
34 difference there. I'm suspecting it may be something
35 else that's infecting or causing that jelly-type flesh in
36 the fish here. That's just my opinion, I'm not a
37 pathologist.

38

39 Are there any other questions you might
40 have regarding this. I have a paper I can hand you
41 that's the latest -- it's a draft stage of their project
42 from the University of Washington. I can leave you with
43 that to copy and hand out. If there aren't any other
44 questions, I don't know exactly where to go from here.

45

46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions to Dave,
47 Terry or Paul. Like I said earlier, probably when I was
48 talking to you over the lunch hour is that many of these
49 concerns that were voiced from our member from Anaktuvuk
50 and Kaktovik about the flesh being jelly-like when they

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1 harvested the fish during the early spring and late
2 summer fishing time.

3

4 MR. WISWAR: Uh-huh.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And they've noticed
7 that for the past couple of years, anyway, previous when
8 we first found out or heard about it that the concern was
9 being voiced but we didn't know what was causing the
10 problem. They were suspecting that it was because of the
11 handling of the fish from the tagging and marking of the
12 fish in the area but they weren't sure.

13

14 MR. WISWAR: Okay.

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We didn't know which
17 way to turn but voiced a concern that it was being
18 noticed.

19

20 MR. WISWAR: My understanding is you said
21 it was in the last two or three years that this
22 increased?

23

24 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yes.

25

26 MR. WISWAR: As far as Kaktovik is
27 concerned, we haven't done any fish studies up there or
28 in the coastal area since 1991. I don't know how much
29 monitoring is done in the Prudhoe Bay area anymore, I
30 think maybe you probably know more about that than I do
31 at this point.

32

33 Is this in both char, the dolly varden
34 char and Arctic cisco, are there any other species that
35 this has been seen in?

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Paul had also mentioned
38 earlier that they're starting to see that in the rivers.

39

40 MR. BODFISH: Grayling and broadhead
41 whitefish.

42

43 MR. WISWAR: I guess, I'd like to talk to
44 you sometime later today. There is a fund that addresses
45 fish health and I would need to get more information out
46 of it and perhaps we can help address this issue with
47 that.

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: You know, start helping
50 and trying to address the concern that's been voiced over

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1 the years. We've been kind of in a stalemate as to which
2 way to turn because we weren't sure as to what was
3 causing this problem in the fish.

4

5 MR. WISWAR: Is this mostly with the
6 spring and the late summer -- through the late summer
7 harvest?

8

9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's probably in the
10 early spring for the area in Anaktuvuk because they have
11 to travel over the terrain up there with the snowmachines
12 to get to the lake and river for fishing.

13

14 MR. WISWAR: So it's under ice?

15

16 CHAIRMAN BROWER: It's under icefishing,
17 yes. And then in Kaktovik it would be in the mid-summer
18 or early summer that they're doing their fishing up there
19 in Kaktovik.

20

21 MR. WISWAR: Okay.

22

23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And Paul, this is the
24 first I've heard of it this year. You folks probably
25 noticed it over the course of last year.

26

27 MR. BODFISH: Yeah, end of August and
28 under the icefishing, September and October.

29

30 MR. WISWAR: I guess I'd like to talk to
31 Mr. Bodfish later and perhaps we can get some dates down
32 and I'd like to get his personal phone number and stuff
33 like that so we can talk more about it if that's okay?

34

35 MR. BODFISH: Okay.

36

37 MR. WISWAR: Okay.

38

39 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I'd like to get a
40 copy of your paper that you were talking about in draft
41 just to share it with some of the community members from
42 the two villages.

43

44 MR. WISWAR: Sure.

45

46 CHAIRMAN BROWER: They probably could
47 raise some questions to what they're observing and we
48 could forward them to you once we hear from them back.

49

50 MR. WISWAR: Okay. I need to stress that

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1 that's in draft form and it's provided by the University
2 of Washington.

3

4 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Okay.

5

6 MR. WISWAR: Okay. Two other items I'd
7 like to bring up, they're for your information needs.
8 One is that in response to the declines noted in Arctic
9 cisco in the Colville River, we have put in a proposal
10 for a study in the Kaktovik area. More specifically,
11 Kaktovik and Jago Lagoons. These would be fike net
12 stations in the lagoon areas that would be in the same
13 locations that we used between 1998 and 1999 in the
14 studies that were done in the 1002 area then. The point
15 would be to compare catch rates of Arctic cisco and dolly
16 varden char from that period to this period to see if
17 there's any declines that can be noted in that area as
18 well.

19

20 One of the things it may fall short in is
21 because of the placement of fike nets in that area at the
22 time, I don't know if we'll be able to address the
23 incidents of recruitment. In other words, the younger
24 the year of cisco coming from the McKenzie across we
25 don't have, in those areas, because the baseline isn't
26 there in those two particular lagoons. It depends a lot
27 on the weather patterns of whether or not the younger are
28 either going to go on the outside of the Barrier Islands
29 or the inside and typically our fike net stations were on
30 the inside. So that may fall short in that area but I'm
31 sure there might be some other areas in the Prudhoe Bay
32 area that could give an indices of the recruitment.

33

34 The next item is a study that we're going
35 to have going starting this summer. It's to look at the
36 oval wintering area or possible oval wintering area in
37 the Canning River. That would be in the lower part of
38 the river. It's been long suspected there might be some
39 potential overwintering areas there that are not
40 necessarily associated with springs but more with deep
41 pools and with more and more development occurring just
42 to the west of the Canning River there it's certainly a
43 concern that if there's an overfish wintering that it
44 should be looked at.

45

46 Evidence that there might be some areas
47 is that there is in the Sag and of course, the Colville,
48 where overwintering occurs and we think that as the
49 Canning is one of the other biggest rivers on the Slope,
50 it would be a candidate and we certainly wouldn't want to

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1 miss any chances there. The studies in cooperation with
2 the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We're going to look
3 at it briefly this summer and try to identify the pools
4 and then go back in April or so of 2003 and actually go
5 back to where we mark the pools and get some camera and
6 divers underneath the ice to see if we can find fish
7 there.

8

9 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Dave, I got a question
10 here.

11

12 MR. WISWAR: Yes.

13

14 CHAIRMAN BROWER: In regards to doing
15 your work, before you -- probably, you know, it might be
16 a good idea to communicate with the community of Kaktovik
17 and some of their elders that know about these areas
18 probably the overwintering areas. Because they have a
19 lot of information and knowledge from using those areas
20 for quite a few years, fishing for subsistence. Have you
21 had any thoughts on trying to communicate with the
22 community, maybe even just a few community elders as to
23 how much they know about the area?

24

25 MR. WISWAR: I was hoping to talk to
26 Fenton Rexford here about that. My experience up there
27 goes back to the early '80s and I've read a number of
28 reports on subsistence up there and we don't see anything
29 in that lower Canning area that -- or that nobody's
30 reported anything of fishing that goes back to the
31 Kaktovik subsistence report that came out, I believe in
32 1982 as well. So we did do our homework on it, somewhat,
33 yes.

34

35 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thanks. Anything,
36 Terry or Paul.

37

38 MR. WISWAR: Thank you.

39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you, Dave. The
41 next agenda item we have is 11F, Alaska Department of
42 Fish and Game, Subsistence, Sverre, and Sverre couldn't
43 make it up. Okay, we'll go down to No. 2 then, Wildlife
44 Conservation, Geoff Carroll.

45

46 MR. CARROLL: I've got to set up, so
47 maybe we could take a little break or something.

48

49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Sure, we'll take a few
50 minute break here while you get set up.

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1 (Off record)

2

3 (On record)

4

5 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Good afternoon, ladies
6 and gentlemen, we'll call the meeting back to order.
7 We're on the agenda of Item 11F2, Alaska Department of
8 Fish and Game, Wildlife Conservation, Geoff Carroll. You
9 have the floor Geoff.

10

11 MR. CARROLL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
12 I'm Geoff Carroll with Department of Fish and Game,
13 Barrow office. I'm just going to briefly run through a
14 few of the kind of population status and surveys of what
15 we're doing on some of the wildlife populations and some
16 actions that the State Board of Game took in relation to
17 these species at their last Board of Game meeting.

18

19 I'll start with muskoxen. Muskoxen, we
20 have kind of a variety of hunts on the North Slope that
21 are available, there's a Tier II subsistence hunt. Nine
22 permits were issued to residents from Nuiqsut for that
23 area between Nuiqsut and the Dalton Highway. A couple of
24 people have harvested their muskoxen in the fall and the
25 rest will probably get theirs this March.

26

27 The people from -- well, there's nobody
28 from Nuiqsut here but I was just going to give a little
29 reminder that if they already have their tags, but
30 they'll need to purchase hunting licenses for the year
31 2002 to harvest their muskoxen this spring.

32

33 We also opened the Tier I registration
34 hunt between the Dalton Highway Corridor and the Canning
35 River. Those permits are available in either Nuiqsut or
36 Kaktovik. Anybody can go get those permits and then
37 travel over into that area to hunt. The same deal, you
38 need to have a current hunting license. There's no use
39 of aircraft allowed for either one of those hunts. In
40 the registration hunt, when four muskoxen are harvested
41 we'll close the hunt.

42

43 The population of muskoxen in the Unit
44 26B area has remained fairly stable since about 1997. We
45 counted 92 muskoxen in there in '97, '96 and '99 year,
46 2000 we counted 98 and last summer we counted 106. They
47 have been gradually expanding their range, though, to the
48 west. You can see those four groups now are in either
49 reproducing groups that are in Unit 26A. And these were
50 locations from last summer when we did composition

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1 counts. You know, three of four years ago those same
2 groups would have been over in the 26B side of the line.
3 Because muskoxen are expanding the range to the west the
4 Board of Game passed a regulation at this last meeting
5 expanding the hunt area and now people that get those
6 Tier II permits can legally hunt in either Unit 26A or
7 26B. So that was just kind of a necessary correction in
8 the regulation in response to the behavior of the
9 muskoxen and their expansion.

10

11 Kind of a management plan that we worked
12 on several years ago, one of the goals is to maintain a
13 stable population through there and the population really
14 has remained pretty stable for the last five years.

15

16 I'll move on to moose. As you know we
17 had a serious decline in the North Slope moose population
18 in the early 90s, but since '96 the calf survival
19 improved a lot and the population has gradually been
20 increasing. We hit a low spot. We do what we call an
21 area trend count every year in kind of the core moose
22 area where we start from the mouth of the Colville River
23 and go down the Colville down to Nuiqsut, count the moose
24 in that area and then also on the Lower Chandalar and
25 Lower Anaktuvuk Rivers. And we kind of hit a low there
26 in 1996 of 152 moose and we're back up to 333 moose in
27 that area again in our 2001 count. In the count that we
28 did this fall, we do composition counts and we found that
29 there were 72 bulls per 100 cows in the population. So
30 it kind of reflected that's kind of an unharvested
31 population, seems to gravitate towards, you know, have
32 hunters harvesting the bulls, a lot of time you'll have
33 30 bulls per 100 cows or less than that, sometimes they
34 get down to six or seven bulls per 100 cows in heavily
35 hunted populations, but, anyway, it seemed apparent that
36 we had enough of a population and enough bulls that we
37 could probably start having a little bit -- we could
38 start increasing the number of bulls that were harvested
39 out of that population. Previous to this year it's been
40 a very limited hunt, it's just downstream from the mouth
41 of the Anaktuvuk River, and just during the month of
42 August. The reason we kept it during just the month of
43 August was that there was already a controlled use area
44 with the restriction that you couldn't use aircraft in
45 that area during the month of August, so that really
46 restricted the number of hunters that were coming in but
47 it also provided a good subsistence hunt for the Nuiqsut
48 hunters.

49

50 With the increase of population, the

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1 Board of Game passed a regulation that increased both the
2 hunt area and the length of the season. What they passed
3 is that now up until the first of September, during that
4 time period they increased the hunt area to where now you
5 could hunt up to and including the Chandalar River. So
6 now you can hunt the Chandalar River, the Anaktuvuk River
7 or that Lower Colville section. So that increased the
8 hunt area for the people that, you know, want to move up
9 farther on the river, and that makes a lot of sense
10 because that area below, it has a fairly sparse
11 population and everything from the mouth of the Anaktuvuk
12 up farther is kind of what we call the core moose area
13 and there's a lot higher moose density in there, so that
14 increased the hunt area. And then they increased the
15 length of the season by saying that after September 1st,
16 then the entire 26A is open for moose hunting. They said
17 we're having kind of a recovering population so we could
18 increase the hunt some but we wanted to really keep it
19 under control, too, and there's kind of a variety of ways
20 that you could limit the number of moose taken. One of
21 those is, you know, a short season, another is to put
22 antler restrictions on, say, that you could only shoot
23 moose with greater than 50-inch antlers or maybe very
24 small bull moose. But what we suggested and what the
25 North Slope Borough Fish and Game Management Committee
26 recommended was that we just extend the time period for
27 the controlled use area so that you still can't use
28 aircraft to access that area to hunt moose. And so kind
29 of the argument that we heard from people in Nuiqsut that
30 didn't like the antler restriction was that, you know, if
31 all you have area antler restrictions and people with
32 airplanes come in then they've got all the advantage
33 because they can fly all around and find a big moose and
34 set down and camp the night and harvest it where if
35 you're based on the ground it's really hard to get around
36 and find a big moose. So this was a -- you know, the
37 Board of Game agreed, you know, to give more of an
38 advantage to subsistence hunters by restricting the use
39 of aircraft.

40

41 So that's kind of the final regulation
42 they came up with which I thought was very fair to North
43 Slope hunters.

44

45 Caribou. We had a variety of projects.
46 One project that we initiated last summer was we -- you
47 know, we've gotten a lot of valuable information in the
48 past about caribou distribution and what areas, you know,
49 seemed to be critical habitat areas and, you know, where
50 they go during times when -- you know, basically during

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1 the dark of the winter when we can't get out and fly
2 surveys and we use satellite collars, radio collars to
3 get a lot of valuable information. But one thing we
4 always realized was -- well, we would only put collars on
5 cow caribou and there were a variety of reasons for that.
6 One is you just get more information from a female as far
7 as calf production and a lot of other things. But we
8 really do want to find out more about where the male
9 segment of the population went so last summer.

10

11 We put six satellite radio collars on the
12 -- on the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd. That was a joint
13 project between BLM and North Slope Borough Department of
14 Wildlife Management and Fish and Game. The Borough
15 bought the collars and they're the ones that are, you
16 know, have kind of have access to the data. I mean the
17 data comes into the Fish and Game office and then it's
18 shared with the other participants in the agreement.

19

20 So at this time we have, you know, a fair
21 number of radio collars on the Central Arctic Herd, the
22 Teshekpuk Herd. And I'll show you another map in a
23 minute that shows the Western Arctic Herd. But the
24 Central Arctic Herd is in blue, the Teshekpuk Herd is in
25 red and I'll show you the Western Arctic Herd. But
26 they've kind of separated out into, you know, their
27 separate areas for the winter. It's kind of interesting,
28 one thing about the Teshekpuk Herd is you just never know
29 what they're going to do in the wintertime. Some years
30 they'll winter down by Anaktuvuk, sometimes down by Cape
31 Lisburne. One year most of the herd even went down to
32 the Seward Peninsula, down that far. But this year
33 they're all -- most of them are right up here on the
34 Slope, you know, and we've been seeing a lot of them
35 right here around Barrow and it sure looks like there's a
36 lot around Atkasuk and Wainwright. But one of the real
37 interesting things was that three of the bulls that we
38 put collars on in the Teshekpuk Herd, we collared them
39 way over by the Tapagarook, and they stayed with the
40 Teshekpuk Herd until about the first of August and then
41 they split off and by August 8th they started moving off
42 down this way and now they're spending the winter in the
43 area of the Central Arctic Herd. So we're not quite sure
44 if, you know, they were actually Central Arctic Herd
45 bulls that were way over in Teshekpuk country last summer
46 or if they're Teshekpuk Bulls that have gone off to visit
47 the Central Arctic Herd cows for the winter and, you
48 know, maybe we'll find out that the bulls just really
49 aren't -- don't show that much fidelity to herds, maybe
50 they kind of bounce back and forth. Anyway, that's been

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1 real interesting and we're sure curious to see what's
2 going to happen this summer, you know, whether they'll go
3 back up into the Central Arctic Herd summering area or
4 the Teshekpuk.

5
6 And this one shows the Western Arctic
7 Herd half of things. There's not many -- there's one
8 Western Arctic Herd collared caribou that's still up on
9 the Slope but most of them headed south. Some years, you
10 know, there might be 30 or 40,000 of them that will stay
11 up on the Slope but this year most of them went to the
12 south and they're all kind of spread through the Kobuk
13 country and down through there but a whole slug of them
14 went out onto the Seward Peninsula and, you know, they're
15 causing the reindeer herders fits down there. But, you
16 know, you have lots of caribou to hunt down in the Seward
17 this year. But reindeer herds aren't as happy about it.
18 And, you know, the Western Arctic Herd is a giant herd
19 that numbers, at our last count numbered 430,000 animals
20 in 1999. That was actually down a little bit from '96
21 when we counted 460,000 but we'll be counting them again
22 this summer and see if population actually is decreasing
23 or if that -- we think that that count might have just
24 been off because of the conditions of the days when we
25 were counting them.

26
27 So calf research plans for the caribou is
28 we'll be doing what we call short yearling surveys this
29 spring. That's where we go and count the number of
30 calves that survive the winter and that's, you know, we
31 call that the recruitment. That's what's actually being
32 added to the population. Then we'll be doing calving
33 surveys in early June -- well, early to mid-June.
34 Calving surveys were very interesting in 2001 because of
35 the very late snow melt-off conditions seemed to hold the
36 herd back. Usually they migrate, take off migrating.
37 About the first of May they start moving toward Teshekpuk
38 Lake. This year most of them didn't start moving until
39 at least the third week of May and many of them didn't
40 get back to the calving area when it was time to calve.
41 What we saw was the ones that did get back to the calving
42 area, you know, during the June 2nd to June 16th, they
43 had fairly calf survival -- they had very good calf
44 survival actually, but the ones that were migrating
45 later, almost all of their calves died. It's just
46 interesting, it's a little hard to determine exactly why
47 because the conditions up around the lake were actually
48 snowier than they were where the other caribou were
49 coming from. But it just seemed like the caribou that
50 weren't already to the calving area had such a strong

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1 migratory urge that they just kept moving after they had
2 their calves and the calves weren't really ready to
3 migrate and had very poor survival.

4
5 Then we'll be doing a photo census this
6 summer of both the Teshekpuk Herd and the Western Arctic
7 Herd. As I said, it will be interesting to see, the
8 Western Arctic Herd has gone through kind of a phenomenal
9 growth phase through the late '70s and '80s and early
10 '90s and has kind of leveled off during the latter part
11 of the '90s. And the Teshekpuk herd kind of went through
12 the same growth pattern so it will be interesting to see
13 if both of those herds, if they're just kind of going to
14 remain stable. We're all kind of hoping they do for
15 awhile. We don't want them to just keep growing and
16 growing and then have a big crash. But it's a little
17 hard to predict what will happen in the future with
18 those. But anyway, we'll keep counting them every three
19 years and see what develops.

20
21 I think that's all I got, Mr. Chairman.

22
23 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right, thank you,
24 Geoff. Any questions from the Council members, Terry or
25 Paul. You know, I wrote down 101 questions here Geoff,
26 I'll get started here in a second.

27
28 MR. TAGAROOK: Just one question, Geoff,
29 when did they start migrating? Have you noticed any
30 changes in when they started migrating?

31
32 MR. CARROLL: You mean start like the
33 spring migration?

34
35 MR. TAGAROOK: The fall migration.

36
37 MR. CARROLL: Oh, the fall migration.

38
39 MR. TAGAROOK: When that occurs.

40
41 MR. CARROLL: Well, you know, it's always
42 a hard -- it's hard to say that, you know, this the day
43 that that caribou started its migration, you know, it's
44 kind of gradual transition. In the spring, you know,
45 it's more dramatic because in the winter they pretty much
46 -- you know, they'll settle in someplace and pretty much
47 stay put for maybe three months. You know, they hardly
48 -- they just seem like they settle into one spot and try
49 to, you know, save their energy reserves and they don't
50 move around a lot. And then, you know, someday, usually

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1 in early May, they all of a sudden just take off towards
2 Teshekpuk Lake, you know, and so it's pretty noticeable
3 in the spring. In the fall, you know, they're moving
4 around a lot anyway and then sort of gradually working
5 south and then at some point, you know, they're pretty
6 much -- well, and that's with the Western Arctic Caribou
7 Herd, you know, they have more of a consistent pattern
8 where they'll take off to the south. And that's the
9 other thing with the Teshekpuk Herd, is you never know
10 which direction they're going to migrate. You know, the
11 most common movement is to move from the Teshekpuk region
12 over to the Atkasuk and Wainwright region, they seem to
13 do that. A bunch of them seem to do that just about
14 every year, some years more than others. But there's
15 other years, like last year, a pretty large segment of
16 them headed down towards Anaktuvuk and spent fall and
17 winter down there and then other years they've gone over
18 towards Lisburne. So you know, with those guys it's a
19 little harder to, you know, really put your finger on
20 when the fall migration starts because you're not sure
21 which direction they're even going to migrate and also
22 it's just kind of a gradual transition.

23

24 MR. TAGAROOK: I think Wainwright is a
25 turnoff point from the Teshekpuk Herd and the Western
26 Herd and they go up inland.

27

28 MR. CARROLL: Yeah, I think you guys are
29 right there where the two herds kind of come together,
30 you know, a pretty good spot to be.

31

32 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other comments or
33 questions for Geoff. I think I have, going over my notes
34 here, and I had something about the moose population.
35 You were saying it was getting to be 72 bulls per 100
36 cows?

37

38 MR. CARROLL: Yeah, that's what it was
39 for last fall's composition count. It's real nice to
40 see, you know, to fly the surveys because you go in there
41 and, you know, a lot of times when you do a moose
42 composition count, all the big bulls keep getting shot
43 every year so all you see is a bunch of a runny bulls,
44 you know, but in that one you've got everything from the
45 spike bulls right up to the really bulls and -- but
46 anyway, it's kind of nice to see a population like that.

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Well, that's good to
49 hear that they're increasing. You know, we've been
50 monitoring with you -- along with Alaska Department of

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1 Fish and Game and the North Slope Borough, that the
2 population is fluctuating and slowly increasing and
3 that's good to hear that it's starting to get back up in
4 numbers.

5

6 MR. CARROLL: Yeah. Yeah, it is nice.

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Another question is in
9 regard to this satellite collaring information on the
10 caribou. You probably noticed since the industry activity
11 started near Teshekpuk area, did you see any -- notice
12 any movement of the caribou just from the disturbance?

13

14 MR. CARROLL: Well, we're sure going to
15 look at that. We don't have enough data to really look
16 at it now. You know, during the year I just get, you
17 know, kind of a map like that once every week or two
18 weeks. But, you know, at the same time we get data on
19 disks, you know, that has movement from every day and
20 we'll need to look at that more detailed information. I
21 think your department just completed a contract with a
22 consulting group, ABR, to analyze that data again and
23 that's one thing we'll sure look at, is, you know, kind
24 of just as detailed movements as possible in relation to
25 where those seismic trends have been.

26

27 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, I just thought
28 I'd throw that question out just to see if you noticed
29 any movement since the time the activity started and the
30 caribou started moving west away from the community, you
31 know, there's been quite a few caribou over the winter
32 right here in front of Barrow and a little ways in and
33 with the activity being out there, you'd think you'd be
34 able to notice some of the movement changes on the
35 caribou.

36

37 MR. CARROLL: Yeah, you know, it's always
38 hard to interpret that stuff, you know, because it's
39 really hard to sort out what the caribou would have done
40 if there wasn't any activity, you know, because
41 especially these Teshekpuk are so variable, you know.
42 One year they'll be here and one year over there. It's
43 not like they seem to go to the same place every year.
44 It's always hard to interpret that but we'll sure do our
45 best. You know, we'll look at the movement in relation
46 to the time the seismic operations move into particular
47 areas where the caribou area.

48

49 Maybe Mr. Yokel's got something to say
50 about that.

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1 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Dr. Yokel.

2

3 MR. YOKEL: Yeah, I just wanted to horn
4 in a little bit, Mr. Chairman.

5

6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Go ahead.

7

8 MR. YOKEL: Well, two things. First back
9 up to Terry's thing about migration. I was going to say,
10 coming soon to a theater near you will be a very brief
11 movie of those data. When we let the contract for data
12 analysis, one of the things we wanted to accomplish was
13 to have some way of presenting the data that would be
14 relatively easy for everyone to understand and to get the
15 information out to the villages. And so one thing the
16 contractor did was make movies of the location and so you
17 can actually sit there and over a few minutes watch the
18 movements over time and it's pretty interesting.

19

20 Two things you'll see is that, like Geoff
21 said, in the spring, they just all rapidly converge
22 towards Teshekpuk Lake. The other thing you'll see is
23 relevant to Harry's question just now, and that's about
24 winter movements. And from December through April, you
25 won't see any of them go anywhere. Once it gets cold and
26 dark out there they stay wherever when the conditions get
27 like that. So if we actually find evidence that caribou
28 are moving relatively long distances in the winter in
29 relationship to seismic exploration activities, number 1,
30 I'll be pretty surprised and, number 2, I'll suspect that
31 that has a real negative impact on the caribou energy
32 balance in the wintertime, not to mention any impact it
33 has on hunters and their access to caribou.

34

35 That's all I had to say, thanks.

36

37 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Terry.

38

39 MR. TAGAROOK: In the past they used to
40 come in the latter part of August, the caribou going
41 through Wainwright from the Teshekpuk Herd, but it seems
42 like they're going in later after the river freezes up.

43

44 MR. YOKEL: Well, like Geoff said, the
45 fall migration patterns are highly variable. Certainly
46 variable for the Teshekpuk Herd as a whole. And I don't
47 know the Western Herd as well but it's a huge herd, you
48 know, almost half a million animals, they don't migrate
49 as a unit. There are many, many groups of caribou that
50 move through the Brooks Range in many different passes in

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1 the fall. And what you see from one year to another at a
2 certain point on the ground say, Wainwright, is bound to
3 vary some over time even with no outside influence that
4 we know of.

5

6 MR. TAGAROOK: What about the wolves, do
7 they play an important role in that?

8

9 MR. CARROLL: The wolves?

10

11 MR. TAGAROOK: Yes.

12

13 MR. CARROLL: Well, yeah, they certainly
14 can in some situations. You know, we kind of feel like
15 the Western Arctic Herd is so large that, you know, the
16 wolf predation isn't probably a big factor with it now
17 but I don't know, I'm hearing more reports of more
18 wolves, you know, out on the coastal plain this year and
19 I'm sure if there are wolves in a particular area, that
20 the caribou would definitely tend to move away from that
21 area, you know, so I'm sure that they can have an affect
22 on caribou movements.

23

24 MR. TAGAROOK: Well, last fall there was
25 some caribous that crossed our river that were going
26 toward the west and the next thing we know they're coming
27 back. It might be the wolves chasing them or something.

28

29 MR. CARROLL: Yeah, it sure could be.

30

31 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other comments.
32 Anyway, Geoff, in regards to this muskoxen permits, you
33 said you had four permits to be issued, I didn't get the
34 whole thing?

35

36 MR. CARROLL: Well, yeah, we have two
37 subsistence hunts over in the 26B area that, we'll call
38 it a Tier II hunt, that's the area between the Dalton
39 Highway and would have been over to Nuiqsut, but now
40 includes to the west of Nuiqsut as well, and that's nine
41 permits that are given out for that hunt each year.
42 Anybody in the state can apply for them but you have to
43 fill out an application and hunters are given permits --
44 well, they're scored depending on how long you've hunted
45 in an area and, you know, your subsistence need. And
46 generally people from Nuiqsut or Colville Village get all
47 those permits. But there's another hunt for the area to
48 the east between the Dalton Highway Corridor and the
49 Canning River and it's a registration hunt. And again,
50 anybody can get one of these permits but they have to

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1 pick them up in either Nuiqsut or Kaktovik. And so
2 anybody that wants to can get one and then travel over
3 into that area and hunt and then we close the season when
4 four muskoxen have been harvested.

5
6 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Oh, okay, all right,
7 thank you.

8
9 MR. TAGAROOK: What about for 26A?

10
11 MR. CARROLL: Well, that was a change
12 made at the Board of Game and so now for the first time
13 there is an open season in 26A but it will be limited
14 probably to the area to the east of the Ikpikpuk or
15 actually the -- they designate the hunt and then the
16 Department of Fish and Game decides, you know, just
17 exactly what the hunt area will be and so the Board of
18 Game gave us a lot of leeway that we could draw the
19 boundary just about anywhere in 26A, but we'll probably
20 draw it in relation to where the muskoxen actually
21 exists.

22
23 There is another hunt and this one is
24 kind of for dispersing muskoxen and this was passed a few
25 years ago. And it was to address the concern of hunters
26 that muskoxen might move into one of their caribou
27 hunting areas and displace the caribou from that area.
28 And if that happens, if muskoxen do move into an area and
29 people feel that it's affecting their caribou hunting we
30 can issue permits for those muskoxen. So legally the way
31 it's supposed to happen is that if people see a group of
32 muskoxen in an area, they feel it's affecting their
33 caribou hunting then they contact me and we're able to
34 issue permits and open a season, you know, for however
35 many muskoxen are there. And we've done that a couple of
36 times in the Point Lay area and then over in the Chip
37 River area. And, you know, if you have a bunch of
38 muskoxen move in the Wainwright area or something, you
39 know, just contact me and we can open a season on them,
40 too.

41
42 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other comments or
43 questions. Did you have any other information you had to
44 bring up, Geoff?

45
46 MR. CARROLL: No, I think that's all for
47 now.

48
49 CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right, thank you
50 very much.

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1 MR. CARROLL: Thank you.

2

3 CHAIRMAN BROWER: We have one more issue
4 under Department of Fish and Game on fisheries. Is that
5 another informational item? Fred?

6

7 MR. VIAVONT: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair
8 and Council members. My name is Tim Viavont from the
9 Department of Fish and Game. And I'm the project leader
10 for the Office of Subsistence Management funded North
11 Slope dolly varden project and I'll say just a couple of
12 things about Sverre Pedersen's harvest monitoring project
13 in Kaktovik.

14

15 I guess all I can really say about
16 Sverre's project was that it seemed to go -- everything
17 went very well. He's finishing household surveys. He
18 had a little trouble getting the number of genetic
19 samples but that seemed to be related to low harvest.
20 Apparently people were having trouble getting as many
21 fish as they might have had in the past in the marine
22 water fisheries in August.

23

24 Just a few things about the annual
25 statewide sportfish harvest survey. The numbers of
26 effort on the North Slope went down a little bit for the
27 year 2000 from 1999 from about 5,200 to about 4,700
28 angler days. A little under half of those days are
29 associated with the immediate haul road area and the
30 entire North Slope makes up for the remainder of those
31 days. Harvests of grayling, lake trout and dolly varden
32 all remained pretty constant and are about at the 10-year
33 average which are extremely low for lake trout. The
34 estimated harvest was 18 fish. Just a little over 1,100
35 dolly varden and a about a little under a thousand
36 grayling. So none of that seems to be much of a concern
37 given that it's spread over a very large geographic area
38 and it doesn't seem to be changing or increasing at all.

39

40 The dolly varden project on the North
41 Slope went quite well other than we had trouble getting
42 some genetic samples because of poor weather conditions
43 and high water. There was a major rain event in August
44 and it kind of flooded out a couple of the rivers we were
45 trying to get into and sample on. We were able to do
46 aerial surveys on the Ivishak and also a mark and
47 recapture abundance estimate. The surveys showed that we
48 were able to have a high level of precision which means
49 that we were able to replicate counting the same number
50 of fish. The mark recapture estimate showed that the

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1 number we were counting only represents about a quarter
2 of the fish that we estimate are actually there. That's
3 fairly typical to aerial survey data when there's large
4 number of fish. The larger number of fish in a river the
5 lower the fraction you're actually counting. And part of
6 the project's goal is to come up with a correction factor
7 that you can apply to future counts.

8

9 We counted about 11,000 fish in the
10 Ivishak and that's not the entire drainage that's just
11 about a 10-mile index area. And our abundance estimate
12 was just under 50,000 fish for that same index area. And
13 those numbers are slightly lower than the average of
14 aerial surveys done in the past but there haven't been
15 aerial surveys done consistently at all. Most of those
16 numbers are from the mid-80s. But there appear to be
17 quite a lot of fish in the Ivishak.

18

19 This upcoming year I'm going to try and
20 do aerial surveys on the Anaktuvuk to see, you know, how
21 those numbers compare to aerial surveys that have been
22 done sporadically over the past 15 years.

23

24 And basically, the only other thing I was
25 going to say is when we were handling dollies in the
26 Ivishak we harvested a few to eat and we didn't notice --
27 of those fish we didn't notice any problems with their
28 flesh, but most of the fish were just, you know, seining
29 them and giving them a fin clip and letting them go so we
30 wouldn't necessarily notice anything unless there was an
31 external sign of something going on with their health.
32 But we didn't notice anything going on with those fish.

33

34 The other thing I will say is that if
35 from some funding source, the Borough, in cooperation
36 with Fish and Wildlife or BLM or anyone else is able to
37 come up with a project to study this particular issue,
38 either in light of, you know, with respect to
39 ichthyophonus or any other factor, we can certainly try
40 and cooperate in collecting samples. And I'll pay a
41 little more closer attention in this upcoming season and
42 just see if I notice anything different about any of the
43 fish that we're handling.

44

45 And I can answer any questions that you
46 might have.

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any questions for Tim,
49 Terry or Paul. I have a question to you, Tim, in regards
50 to that fish you said you were handling, do you notice

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1 anything wrong with the fish? The ones I heard about
2 were from the subsistence hunters in Kaktovik and what
3 they noticed was the same information I passed onto Dave
4 earlier, the meat -- the flesh being a little jelly-like
5 and watery when they were preparing it for dry fish and
6 it wasn't even worth drying.

7

8 MR. VIAVONT: We didn't notice anything.
9 I will ask Sverre if he has noticed anything or the
10 fellow that collected the samples for him in Kaktovik, I
11 can ask him to just see if they noticed, you know,
12 whether there was any specific area or time of the year
13 or if he could just give me an idea of whether it was --
14 or how large a proportion of the fish that were giving
15 him a problem.

16

17 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, if you do get
18 back to Kaktovik, you might want to bring this up with
19 Fenton, he's the one I keep hearing this issue from in
20 Kaktovik. And I've heard it from representatives in
21 Anaktuvuk. You know, they were the first ones to notice
22 the changes in the fish, probably three years ago if I
23 remember right. Thomas Roland was the Fish and Game
24 Management Committee member representing Anaktuvuk and he
25 was the one that brought it up to our attention at that
26 time. And we haven't had any real response to the
27 concern but we'll probably be learning what's causing the
28 problem real shortly with all the samples that are being
29 taken and being analyzed.

30

31 MR. VIAVONT: Well, yeah, and the only
32 other thing I guess I would say about that is that it
33 might be worthwhile to look into looking at a research
34 project proposal for -- well, I guess Mr. Fried sort of
35 indicated that that might be outside the bounds that the
36 Federal Subsistence Board indicated but there may be
37 other avenues of funding that should be investigated,
38 especially if this is something that continues.

39

40 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I don't think I have
41 anymore comments or questions unless Terry or Paul has
42 any or anybody else from the audience. Hearing none,
43 thank you very much Tim.

44

45 MR. VIAVONT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and
46 members of the Council.

47

48 CHAIRMAN BROWER: What else could be
49 talked about that you know of or I missed?

50

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1 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: None that I can see.

2

3 MR. JENNINGS: None that I'm aware of Mr.

4 Chair, unless there's other reports that aren't listed

5 here from any of the other agencies. I think we've

6 covered everybody.

7

8 CHAIRMAN BROWER: I think there's a

9 couple new faces that showed up today, one was Bob and I

10 didn't catch this person's name?

11

12 MR. BUTCHER: Yes, Mr. Chairman. My name

13 is Bill Butcher.

14

15 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Could you come up to

16 the microphone.

17

18 MR. BUTCHER: Mr. Chairman, members of

19 the Board. My name is Bill Butcher with the Commercial

20 Fisheries Division in Fairbanks. It's the Region 3 area.

21 I cover the Yukon and Kuskokwim and Norton Sound,

22 Kotzebue and the North Slope area. And I have no

23 presentation.

24

25 Fred Bue, the area manager he asked me to

26 come here just to relate to you he was on the

27 teleconference on February 11th regarding the Colville

28 River fisheries there and there was some concern there to

29 the Arctic cisco, the numbers appear to be declining in

30 the recent years. And he just -- he's new to the North

31 Slope fisheries so he's behind the learning curve and he

32 just wants to get all the information possible from all

33 the agencies that are involved on the North Slope.

34

35 We have a limited commercial fisheries

36 area, as you're well aware of on the Colville River Delta

37 and then also the subsistence fisheries. As a commercial

38 fisheries manager, he is responsible for any regulatory

39 actions that may take place there. And so he just was

40 brought to the attention that there is maybe some concern

41 for the Arctic cisco there and so he just wants to make

42 it known that if -- that he was willing to work with all

43 agencies and with folks on the North Slope if there is a

44 problem there, that there may be some regulatory action

45 that may be taken down the road but it's really premature

46 now. And it would constitute reduced schedule of

47 commercial fishing or reduce subsistence, if that is a

48 concern for fishermen on the Colville River, Delta.

49

50 CHAIRMAN BROWER: And you're with the

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1 State?

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MR. BUTCHER: State of Alaska, yes.

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CHAIRMAN BROWER: Thank you. And with our North Slope Borough Wildlife Management, we wanted that Colville River fisheries and subsistence fishing for several years, our biologists are particularly interested in that Arctic cisco and the Bering cisco and doing research in the Colville. It's been monitoring that over the years along with this Colville investigator, Larry Malkin.

MR. BUTCHER: Right.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: We're familiar with the population going and fluctuating up and down regarding the cisco in that area and they have some kind of chart that they go by that, you know, depending on the wind currents and all that information, that they utilize to make their assessments on the population, whether it be a good fishing season or a poor fishing season. You might want to talk to him sometime.

MR. BUTCHER: And Fred Bue, the area manager, he's in the process of contacting and trying to acquire that information.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Larry Malkin's been one of those consultants that's been a lot of the research, too, in regards to that Colville River.

MR. BUTCHER: Yes, I have one of his reports, the most recent one. And Fred's aware of it, but like I said, he's behind the curve on it but yet he does have the obligation, if there is a concern, to make some -- have some action there on the Colville River if it's required. But he said it's much too early right now to make any decision like that but just wanted to bring it to your attention.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: All right, thank you very much.

MR. BUTCHER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN BROWER: Any other comments or questions. If not, I think that covers as much of our agenda for today. I think we'll go into recess until tomorrow unless we have any other matters that we need to

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1 discuss. Hearing none, the meeting is recessed until
2 tomorrow morning.

3

4 MR. JENNINGS: What time do you want to
5 start, Mr. Chair?

6

7 CHAIRMAN BROWER: 5:00 a.m.

8

9 MS. B. ARMSTRONG: Then we can take off
10 on the morning plane.

11

12 CHAIRMAN BROWER: Yeah, then you'll be
13 able to take off on the morning plane if nobody arrives.
14 I'm just joking. I don't know, probably about 9:00.
15 9:00 a.m. Thank you very much everybody.

16

17 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)

18

19

* * * * *

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2

3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

4) ss.

5 STATE OF ALASKA)

6

7 I, Joseph P. Kolasinski, Notary Public in and for
8 the state of Alaska and reporter of Computer Matrix Court
9 Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

10

11 THAT the foregoing pages numbered 02 through 87
12 contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the NORTH
13 SLOPE BOROUGH FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY
14 COUNCIL MEETING, VOLUME I, taken electronically by Salena
15 Hile on the 20th day of February 2002, at the Inupiat
16 Heritage Center, Barrow, Alaska;

17

18 THAT the transcript is a true and correct
19 transcript requested to be transcribed and thereafter
20 transcribed by under my direction and reduced to print to
21 the best of our knowledge and ability;

22

23 THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or party
24 interested in any way in this action.

25

26 DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 28th day of
27 February 2002.

28

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Joseph P. Kolasinski
Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 04/17/04 ☐